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THE DENS OF DEATH.

BY CHARLES CAXTON.

I.

How live the crowded thousands in one hive,
The feeble children and the stalwart man?
How heavy hangs the charged and stifled air,
Where life is measured by a frightful span!
Here babes that scarce have seen the light of day
Grow dim with death before another morn;
Here mothers breathe their wretched lives away
Before their smothered innocents are born.

II.

The air, sweet laden with its heaven-born breath,
Gives life nor succor to this dismal den;
But instead of these, upon the wings of Death,
Is borne disease in all its forms to men:
The infant playing on its father's knee,
The babe in rags upon its mother's breast,
The children in their light, unconscious glee,
Partake of death while playing and caressed.

III.

Does Mammon build his temples to the dead?
Those Molochs of the innocents and old?
Is life thus bartered in its infant bed
To meet the greed of appetite and gold?
In the name of all that's good, that's just, that's true,
Let this great crime be curbed for evermore,
And stamp the outlaw's brand upon the crew
That brings disease, for gain, upon our shore!

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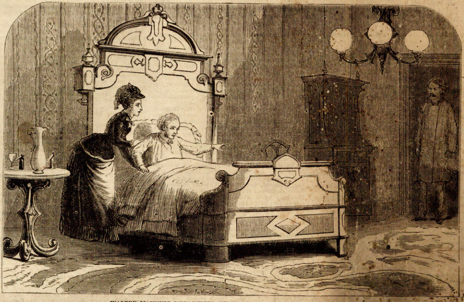

WALTER MANNING RECOGNIZED BY THE DYING MARMADUKE ERISTOUN.

THE

BROADACRES TRAGEDY;

OR,

The Irrevocable Promise.

By CARLOTTA KINGSLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF NO. 27," "FILIPPO, THE BANDIT," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

AGATHA ERISTOUN

> The tongues of dying men enforce attention.
> SHAKESPEARE.

"Has she come?"

"No, master; not yet."

"What o'clock is it?"

"It is nearly twelve."

These words—just these, and no more—were the only sounds which for many hours had broken the stillness of a lonely chamber of death.

The proud master of Broadacres—he whose pride had been engendered and fostered by a long line of aristocratic ancestors—he whose wealth was boundless, and whose power had been colossal—lay tossing upon his dying bed, holding death at bay from hour to hour that that might be accomplished which he hoped would give him a quiet exit from this world of sin and care.

Since twilight the dying man had waited and watched—waiting for the sound of approaching carriage wheels from without, and watched the door of his apartment for the entrance of one who had been hastily summoned to his side.

It was hard for Marmaduke Eristoun, in the prime of life, in the full enjoyment of its pleasures, and in proud possession of its honors, to relinquish earth and its attractions; but it was harder yet to leave it with wishes unfulfilled, with plans half formed which, if accomplished, would have guaranteed a happy future to one whom he loved better than life, riches or honors.

Agatha Eristoun, the heiress of Broadacres, and the only child of its dying master, had been placed in a convent in France several years before the opening of our story, there to complete her education previous to her appearance in the world as the greatest heiress in America, as well as one upon whom nature had lavished every mental and physical charm.. But the dread event which this dark night of the 10th of June, 18—, was to see consummated, had cast its shadow upon the household of Broadacres many weeks before, and an urgent message had been sent to the distant convent that the daughter's return to America might be hastened with all possible speed.

It was this arrival, therefore, which the dying man, in his lonely chamber, was awaiting with such feverish anxiety.

"How long ago did Andrews drive to the station?"

"A full hour, I should judge, sir."

"What is the weather without? Open the window and let me see."

The servant obeyed. He drew aside the heavy damask drapery and laid his hand upon the sash to raise it. A fierce gust of wind shook the casement, as though the Angel of Death then demanded an angry admittance, and the wild storm which burst into the room chilled even the icy flood in the dying man's veins.

"Close it again," he said, and then, with a shiver, he added, "'Tis dreadful for the soul to go forth upon such a night as this; yet most I fear that Agatha will not come."

The servant now returned to his place at his master's side, raised his hand and turned his ear in a listening attitude.

"I hear the carriage wheels now," he said breathlessly. "Have hope, my master. The young lady will not be too late."

"God grant it!" ejaculated the sufferer, and sinking back upon his pillow from which he had involuntarily started, he lay quite still, waiting and watching.

Gradually, from out the wildly beating storm, there was heard the sound of an approaching carriage.

At first indistinct and infrequent, the sounds at length became assured, and before long both master and servant heard the vehicle driven forward so furiously that the rattle of the wheels could be distinctly heard above the roar of the storm.

The invalid's eyes brightened, and he partially raised himself from his pillow as with eager, dilated eyes he looked toward the door.

An instant more, and it was opened. A female figure, with haste disordered dress, and tearful, anxious countenance, rushed across the room and was clasped in the dying man's arms.

"Thank God, you are not too late Agatha."

"Yes, father, thank God," she echoed between her sobs.

"But tell me that this fearful summons is not real!" she cried. "You surely do not seem so ill, my father: your eyes are bright; your hands are cool and moist; the fever seems to have left you, and—"

"Alas! my daughter, do not deceive yourself with false hopes. My eyes are brightened with the last flickering of life, and the fever which for days has been consuming me, has only given place to the chill of death. I feared, I greatly feared that I should die without seeing you; and now that my last prayer has been granted, I must not disregard it by a wanton waste of time. Leave us," he said, to the servant; and the man immediately quitted the apartment, leaving the father and daughter alone together.

"Agatha," he said, taking her hand, "I must indeed speak quickly, for already the breath seems to freeze upon my lips. Do not unnerve me, my daughter, by your sobs. Command your grief for my sake, for you must remember every word I shall now utter."

His voice faltered and became indistinct. A horrible fear fell upon him that even now Death would defeat him, and baffle the anxious waiting of days.

"Quick, Agatha!" he gasped. "Give me yonder cordial!"

She flew to the little table near the bedside, and seizing the tonic, she poured a few of the invigorating drops between her father's pale, almost rigid lips.

Their effect was instantaneous, for he soon opened his eyes, and addressed the weeping girl with something of his old vigor, yet with more eagerness now than tenderness, for great issues hung upon the few rapid words he should be able to utter.

"Listen, Agatha," he said. "My death will leave you alone in the world. Do you remember the last conversation we held together?"

"I do, my father," she replied; and then, as though she would save him the pain of speaking, she quickly added:

"'Twas when you left me at the convent in Paris. You bade me, you exhorted me to look upon my cousin, Walter Manning, as my future husband; to love him as he deserved to be loved, and to become his bride at the expiration of a few years."

"And you—have you resolved to accede to my wishes?"

"I can refuse you nothing, father."

"Bless you for those words, my daughter. I cannot now tell you why my heart is so fixed upon this union; my time here is too short. But after my death, in yonder cabinet you will find papers which will explain all."

With trembling finger he pointed to an ebony cabinet which stood in a remote corner of the apartment, and Agatha recognized it as the one in which, in her childhood, she had seen her father deposit his most valuable possessions.

"And now I must speak of another matter which for years has haunted me with inexorable persistence. I have a fear—a presentiment—that an evil threatens you which it has been the labor of my life to avert."

The dying man spoke quickly, for the effect of the cordial was wearing away and a feebleness was stealing over him which he could not resist. He rallied his energies, and as though he addressed the dread messenger whose approach he had so bravely opposed, exclaimed:

"I cannot—I cannot go quite yet! Give me but a moment more and I shall be satisfied."

Cold perspiration stood in great beaded drops upon his forehead, and when his daughter wiped them away they chilled her hand with their icy touch.

With the energy of despair the sufferer rapidly continued:

"You have a relative, Agatha, of whom you have never heard. I hoped to keep you ignorant of his existence, for he is more subtle, more dangerous than the deadly cobra. Something tells me most surely that he threatens your peace and happiness. For this reason I hoped to see you united to Walter Manning before I died, for he is already on his way hither; yet promise me that you will not delay the rite. Promise me solemnly, Agatha."

"I promise it, father."

"Then I am satisfied. Love your cousin, Walter Manning, as devotedly as he loves you; but beware, oh, beware of—"

He did not finish the sentence. His eyes, wandering from his daughter's face, seemed attracted by some object in the further part of the room, and his expression changed from peace to a startled look of fear and inquiry.

Agatha Eristoun turned her head over her shoulder to learn the cause of her father's altered manner.

She too was startled, and quickly stretched forth her hand for the bell, but it was gone. A man, a stranger whom she had never before seen, stood near the door, and when he saw that his entrance had been observed he came nearer the bedside.

Agatha turned her eyes back to her father's face. Life was at its lowest ebb, yet his eyes were still fixed upon the intruder.

"Walter Manning!" he exclaimed almost inarticulately.

His eylids closed, seemingly from very weakness.

"My cousin? Is it my cousin, Walter Manning?" asked Agatha, bending her lips to her father's ear.

A faint affirmative nod was the only reply she could receive.

She sank upon her knees beside the bed. The dying man opened his eyes once more, and fixed them upon his daughter with an expression she knew not how to interpret. Sorrow, love, anxiety, fear, all seemed struggling to find simultaneous expression.

He opened his lips to speak, half raised his hands toward her, then dropped them listlessly at his side; the eyelids again dropped over the now leaden eyes, a hollow rattle was heard in the throat, the grasp upon the daughter's hand was relaxed, and all was over.

CHAPTER II.

BROADACRES.

> She shook
> The holy water from her eyes,
> And then retired to deal with grief alone.
> SHAKESPEARE.

With her head bowed upon the same pillow whereon rested that of her dead father, Agatha Eristoun sobbed forth her first wild wail of desolation.

Earth seemed a wild waste, life a bitter blank, and she longed to follow him to those untried realms where sorrow and disease are unknown.

She was aroused to a sense of surrounding objects by feeling a hand placed upon her shoulder, and looking up, she beheld the stranger who had so suddenly, so noiselessly appeared upon that death-bed scene.

Agatha Eristoun had quite forgotten his presence in the first shock of her terrible bereavement; but remembering now that her father's last breath had been exhaled in murmuring the name of this trusted relative whom she had solemnly promised to wed, she arose from the bedside, and with what composure she could command bade him welcome to Broadacres.

"'Tis a house of mourning, as you are well aware," she said; "yet its hospitality will be none the less sincere."

"I doubtless owe you an apology," said the young man, "for my sudden and unannounced entrance; but knowing that my uncle was not unaware of my coming, and animated with the hope of receiving his parting blessing, I came hither with unwarrantable boldness. But, my cousin, let me beseech you to retire from this sad spot. Seek your own apartment for the rest and composure you so much require, and if you will intrust me with the office, I will see that everything is done here which is necessary."

Agatha Eristoun allowed herself to be led from the room. She was too sore at heart, her thoughts were too confused, to enable her to act for herself; so she blindly obeyed the suggestions of her cousin, and after leaving the necessary directions with the servants that the new-comer, Mr. Walter Manning, should be obeyed in every particular, she sought her own chamber, there to give free expression to her grief.

Leaving the beautiful heiress of Broadacres for a while alone with her grief, let us rapidly review the history of her family, and thus prepare ourselves for a better understanding of events which are about to transpire.

The last direct descendant of a noble English family, Agatha Eristoun could trace her ancestry back through many honorable generations.

About the middle of the last century a certain Ralph Eristoun, having imbibed various political theories of so radical a nature that their expression would not be tolerated even in England, emigrated to America, and with the same broad views of life which had distinguished him in his native country, purchased and founded an estate which he hoped would rival the fair domain he had left.

His coming was like the arrival of a band of colonists, for he not only brought with him his family, but a goodly company of yeomen, artisans and servants, whom he induced to settle in the vicinity of his own manor, and a hamlet of no mean pretensions soon resulted from their united skill and enterprise.

Ralph Eristoun hoped to maintain the same relations toward his *protegés* which existed in England, and in the character of landlord, philanthropist and social aristocrat, to keep alive the old time relations of master and servant. But before many years elapsed he discovered that the genius of America had inoculated his people with an independence which was troublesome, and little by little he was forced to sell the land upon which he had settled them, or [illegible] altogether abandoned.

The result was, that at the expiration of a quarter of a century the princely estate of Broadacres, though still ample and richly cultivated, had been narrowed down to republican limits, and the thriving village of "Eristoun," peopled by independent, and even wealthy inhabitants, looked upon no man as master, though they still regarded the family at the mansion with feelings akin to filial regard.

The wide domain of Broadacres proper had experienced more vicissitudes than the village, for though it had known three proprietors since its foundation, it had not been occupied but a short time by any of them.

Ralph Eristoun lived but a few years after the mansion was completed. Upon his death his son returned to England, where he spent the greater portion of his life, and though the estate in America was managed with the most scrupulous care by trusty agents, its proprietor did not reside upon it until a few years previous to the opening of our story, when Marmaduke Eristoun returned to it from England, a widower, whose only child, a daughter, had been sent to France to receive her education.

Filled with sincere admiration for America and her institutions, it had been the design of Mr. Eristoun, then in the prime of life, to pass the remainder of his days at Broadacres, and he counted upon such a lease of life that he hoped to put many noble plans into execution. But the sudden failure of his health dissipated these dreams, and forced him to content himself with the accomplishment merely of those which pertained to his own family.

The mansion at Broadacres, situated in the midst of cultivated fields, and flanked on either side by well-preserved mementos of the primeval forest, was built in a style of architecture but seldom seen in our Northern States.

Originally built with a sole regard to utility, its massive front and sturdy towers presented a bold, imposing appearance, which chilled rather than invited the beholder; but subsequent additions had been made which entirely removed this impression, and it now stood a noble structure, graceful in style, yet still substantial and imposing, cheerful in coloring, and surrounded by every evidence of taste and cultivation.

Light, airy balconies had been thrown out before the deep casements in the towers, mullioned windows gave an air of clerical grandeur to the structure, and the high, deep porch which formed the principal entrance to the mansion, as well as the wide galleries at the back, were always suggestive of hospitality and comfort. Vines and trailing roses covered the gray stones with a wall of living green, and the compact hedges, smooth lawns, trim shrubbery, and well-rolled walks, evinced on every hand the most scrupulous care.

Within the mansion nothing belied the exterior. The late owner, Marmaduke Eristoun, had rifled his ancestors' seat in England of its choicest treasures to enrich the home of his adoption.

Though the modern upholsterer's art had been brought into successful requisition, there were other objects which claimed the most refined attention.

Works of art collected by former upholders of the Eristoun name adorned the walls, or stood out white and clear upon lofty pedestals; antique cabinets, filled with greater treasures than the chisel or the pencil could produce, mementos of great men, manuscript copies of famous literary works, rare and unique volumes whose antiquity made them priceless, were here preserved. There was costly plate, too, in abundance, in the stout oaken closets which lined the long dining-room; and the family jewels, too precious to be intrusted in the keeping of a school-girl in the gay French capital, were safely treasured in the ebony cabinet, where lay the important papers to which the dying master had alluded.

But what were all these earthly blessings to the young heiress, who, pale, stricken and helpless, lay upon her couch in her lonely chamber lamenting the fate which had so suddenly robbed her of a father's love and protection.

Agatha Eristoun, endowed by Fortune with her choicest gifts, had not been neglected by Nature. On the contrary, it seemed as though both Venus and Juno must have presided at her birth, for every grace and beauty which could command or win love was hers.

Just entering her eighteenth year, and fresh from the restraints of a French convent, her character, naturally free and [illegible], had scarcely had an opportunity to [illegible] developed.

With the timidity natural to her [illegible] her sex, she shrank from encount[illegible] vicissitudes of life alone, and wh[illegible] thought of her orphan condition, [illegible] relief that she also reflected that [illegible] her father's dying wish, she could [illegible] a comforter, counsellor and friend.

The first violent burst of grief having subsided, her mind dwelt more calmly upon the events of the past few hours, and more especially did she reflect upon the circumstances of her first meeting with her future husband.

The lamp in the chamber of death had been so dim that she had no opportunity of scanning her cousin's countenance; it was only by his voice that she now had an opportunity to judge of him.

She distinctly remembered his tones, yet, strangely enough, to recall them awakened sensations the reverse of pleasurable. He had spoken low, sympathetic words of courtesy; the touch of his hand when he laid it upon her shoulder to recall her to herself, had been tender and solicitous, yet there was awakened in her heart no responsive sentiment of regard, or even kindness.

She feared to analyze her feelings further, lest, in her present excitement, she might be doing her cousin injustice; and when she thought of the solemn vow she had pledged to her father, the few impressions she had already acknowledged to herself seemed sinful.

[illegible] resolved, therefore, to remove [illegible] as soon as possible, she [illegible] her hand to the stand at her [illegible] a soothing draught which the motherly housekeeper had prepared, she drank it to the dregs, and in a few moments was lulled in profound slumber.

Dreams, fitful and [illegible], harassed her in her sleep; the calm, pure brow was ever and anon contracted by pain, or by fearful phantoms; occasionally she would murmur half-articulate words in that language which of late had been the only one she had employed; her ripe, red lips, usually wreathed with smiles even in sleep, were compressed and pale, and the small clenched hands which rested upon the white counterpane told that some fierce struggle was going on in the young girl's brain.

Who shall say that in dreams premonitions are not sometimes given of coming events?

Agatha Eristoun, in her sleep, was bravely combating a gigantic horror—a horror which has its prototype in the future, and which had imbittered her father's existence with its dread shadow.

CHAPTER III.

WALTER MANNING.

> There is a shadow on my heart
> I cannot fling aside.
> ALICE CAREY.

Mindful of the duties which her new position as mistress of Broadacres imposed upon her, Agatha Eristoun arose the next morning resolved that her grief should not make her forgetful of the purpose she had formed the night before.

Her hand trembled somewhat as she laid it upon the door of the breakfast room, and a heightened color came to her cheeks when she saw her cousin standing before the fireplace with a newspaper in his hand.

He laid it aside as soon as she entered, and hastening to her side, made anxious inquiries concerning her welfare. She replied to his queries w[illegible] courtesy, and taking her place at the tab[illegible]gged him to be seated opposite, and rang t[illegible]ll for the coffee. Desultory, constrained [illegible]ersation ensued, and it was only when [illegible]sin became absorbed in his breakfast th[illegible]ha ventured to take a critical survey [illegible]e.

Her first [illegible] was that of surprise, for instead of [illegible] the youthful lover whom her own [illegible]brance and her father's description [illegible]r to expect, she beheld a man app[illegible]r the prime of life, for his hair was [illegible]ith gray, and the lines around the fi[illegible] and large black eyes bespoke one w[illegible]d more than a youth's experience of [illegible]

While Agath[illegible] attentively regarding him, he cl[illegible]aise his right hand, when she noti[illegible]oss it there was a deep scar as[illegible]und, and her quick sympathie[illegible] some allusion to it. But b[illegible]scaped her lips, the gentle[illegible] to her face, and as though [illegible] thoughts which were passing thr[illegible] mind, he said:

"I have [illegible]dering, Cousin Agatha, why you h[illegible]marked upon my changed appearan[illegible]btless you see few traces of your for[illegible]anion and playfellow in the premat[illegible] man before you."

"I ow[illegible]not prepared for the change," Agatha [illegible] "yet I should have expected it, for pa[illegible] mentioned that you were greatly altered."

"Did he, indeed?" was the quick reply. Then lowering his eyes, he said sadly, "In England it is sometimes a bitter struggle to maintain one's independence, in face of the many obstacles which birth and position throw in a poor man's way."

The heart of Agatha was touched with pity, and she quickly said:

"Is it possible that my father would allow so near a relative to struggle with poverty when he had such abundant power to help him?"

"You do your noble father unconscious injustice, Cousin Agatha. Had I been starving I could not have brought my pride to the point of receiving charity, even from a relative. Upon repeated occasions my uncle offered me munificent opportunities, but I preferred to carve my own way to fortune, though in doing so I should sacrifice my youth."

The eyes of Agatha filled with tears as she thought of the suffering which had doubtless wrought so great a change in her once blithe, handsome cousin, and love, which follows stealthily in the wake of pity, prepared to take up its abode in her tender heart.

Yet before the tears which for a moment dimmed her eyes had fallen, she saw her cousin's glance fall upon his wounded hand, and immediately an angry flush overspread his brow.

"What caused it?" asked Agatha quickly, not stopping to consider whether the question were ill-timed or not.

"'Tis but an accidental wound," replied he carelessly. "Yet it was so needlessly incurred, that it excites momentary vexation whenever I look at it. A wretched fellow whose pretensions I have on more than one occasion been the means of setting within proper bounds, took the opportunity just before I sailed from England to attack me in a most unwarrantable manner. Instead of giving him over to the police, I rashly closed with him, and in the encounter which ensued I gained this slight scratch. It is a comfort, however, to reflect that my assailant was rather more roughly handled, and I scarcely think I shall be troubled with his importunities again. I was forced to delay my departure for several days on account of this little affray, otherwise I should have been here before the sad event which occurred last night."

This allusion to the death of her father again brought tears to Agatha's eyes; but Walter Manning, who had given the conversation this turn for a different purpose, hastened to say:

"I trust, Cousin Agatha, that I shall not fall under the imputation of eavesdropping if I confess that while I stood in your father's room last night, I heard words which, despite the accompanying circumstances, filled me with rapture."

Agatha made no reply, but rising abruptly from the table, she walked slowly to the window, and leaning her forehead upon the cool pane, looked abstractedly forth.

Attributing her manner to the abruptness of his speech, Walter Manning followed her to the window, and taking her hand in his, said tenderly:

"Forgive me, dear cousin, if I have startled you. My love must plead in my excuse, and moreover, as I also heard words from your own lips which I can never forget, I hoped that your father's wishes might be speedily fulfilled."

"And so they shall be," said Agatha, turning toward her cousin, and offering him her hand. "Though our long absence has made us virtual strangers to each other, yet, relying upon my father's wisdom and judgment, I do not hesitate to accept you as my future husband. But I cannot think of marriage while there are such mournful duties unfulfilled. After my father's remains have been consigned to the tomb—"

She could pursue the mournful theme no further, but putting her handkerchief to her eyes, she murmured a few words of excuse and left the room.

It was her intention to return to her own chamber, but an impulse she could not resist led her toward the apartment where her father lay in the cold embrace of death.

She turned the lock, and entered the silent, gloomy chamber. With a gesture she dismissed the attendant who had all night kept watch beside the remains, and then, with trembling limbs and sorrowful heart, advanced to the side of the bier.

For a time she stood beside it with clasped hands and fixed eyes, wishing, yet fearing to remove the pall from the face, that she might look once more upon those loved features.

At length, with a great effort, she raised her hands and uncovered the face.

With a cry of alarm she started back, for the features which met her gaze she could hardly recognize as those of the father whose peaceful countenance had once been so familiar to her.

The peace, the calm repose were gone, and in their place was the same look of fear, anxiety and inquiry which had so transformed his expression during his dying moments.

The look seemed frozen upon that marble face, and as she gazed, Agatha Eristoun's mind dwelt with painful interest upon the cause of this terrible change.

That it had been occasioned by the entrance of Walter Manning she well remembered; but could the arrival of a loved relative, a trusted friend, be the sole cause of so sudden and fixed a change?

She remembered her father's painful efforts to speak to her once more; she remembered how he had striven to reach forth his arms, as if to clasp her in a protecting embrace, and even while he did so that troubled expression deepened.

With looks where grief was now mingled with deep, mute questioning, the heiress of Broadacres stood beside her father's lifeless form and asked fearful questions of those inanimate features.

Her heart told her that there was a warning conveyed in that dead man's look; but what was the warning, and against what did it bid her be on her guard?

There was but one remembrance which she could cite in reply: the recollection of her father's words respecting her unknown relative. A stranger fear took possession of her when she remembered that her father's warning had not been completed; that he died without mentioning that dangerous kinsman's name, and that she was thus without the means of distinguishing him from among his friends.

The next moment, however, she chided herself for being disturbed by such thoughts, for she reflected that the evil her father dreaded might never come nigh her; and if it should, would there not be one at her side who would be able to cope with it?

As this thought flashed thro[illegible] her mind, she was conscious that a hu[illegible] hand was drawing the pall up over [illegible]ther's face, and the livid scar upon th[illegible] and told her, even before she raised h[illegible]s to the intruder's face, that her [illegible] stood beside her.

"Again I have been so [illegible] come upon you unawares, Cousin A[illegible] said. "But presuming upon your [illegible] ave constituted myself the guar[illegible] your health, as well as of your mate[illegible]erests. Believe me, my cousin, you d[illegible] to brood over your grief. Cherish [illegible]ory of your father as you remembe[illegible]ile living, and do not seek to impre[illegible]ent image upon your mind."

"Then you have [illegible]e change too!" she cried, laying [illegible] hand upon her cousin's, and aga[illegible]k the pall. "Explain to me [illegible] altered expression. It ca[illegible]e very moment of your en[illegible]

Her cousin stopped [illegible] two, and passed his hand across [illegible]as though he would fain not look u[illegible] countenance before him.

Agatha continued:

"He was but just speakin[illegible] a relative—a kinsman of yours doubtless [illegible]so—whose character he abhorred and even dreaded, yet he was struck with death before he could utter his name. Can you tell me what it is?"

It was some seconds before her companion replied, and when he did so his voi[illegible] had lost the steady calmness it usually bore.

"Why do you seek to know more of that which will only cause you annoyance?" he said. "I indeed know the person to whom your father alluded, but it is many years since I have heard aught of him, and I therefore infer that he is dead. Believing this, let us throw the vail of oblivion over his existence, and let even his name be unmentioned. It may have been decreed by a forbearing Providence that your father should pass the gates of death with the name unspoken."

Again the hand was stretched forth to replace the pall, and this time it was not stayed; but as the features disappeared beneath the white screen, it seemed, to the grief-distorted fancy of Agatha Eristoun, that they were galvanized into sudden, momentary, intense life, for that look of trouble deepened into a seeming spasm of anguish, and the heart of the orphaned daughter echoed with an inward cry of warning.

Nearly fainting with terror, she turned a frightened look of appeal to her cousin, but she instantly repressed the words which arose to her lips.

Was it the effect of having gazed so long upon her father's dead face which now turned that of Walter Manning to such an ashen hue? To the eyes of Agatha Eristoun, the one seemed as livid as the other; yet there was something in the dead, troubled face of her father, which seemed more *human* than the lowering countenance of her cousin. The mouth was firmly compressed, his eyes were bent upon the ground, and a fixed, unalterable determination seemed to have settled upon his features, making them look like those of some dreadful statue of Fate.

A chill came over the young girl's heart as she looked upon him. Surely this was not the same companion with whom she had played in days gone by in "Merrie England." Could years of honest endeavor, even of privation, have worked so great a change—a change in his exterior not only, but she now saw in his heart also?

She began to fear the living man at her side. She longed to cry out in her agony and perplexity, to implore from the frozen form before her some token whereby she might be strengthened and guided.

"Agatha!"

She turned and looked ner cousin full in the face, though fear and growing aversion blanched her cheek.

"Do you remember your father's last words—the words which he spoke when I stood beside his bed?"

"He uttered your name."

"My name—and that was—"

"Walter Manning."

He said no more, but taking his cousin's cold hand in his, led her from the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FRED.'S WIFE.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

"It is too bad!" said Coralie Holbrook, as her mother finished reading a long letter, and deliberately folded it up.

"Too bad!" echoed Ernestine, looking up from a very elaborate and hideous piece of worsted work she was finishing. "It is perfectly outrageous! Why, Fred. might have married *anybody!*"

"And he has married a nobody. Susie Jones!" said Mrs. Holbrook plaintively. "Susan! If there is one name more plebeian than another it is Susan."

"The idea of bringing home a wife from a miserable little western town, when there are such lovely girls in our set," said Coralie. "I had hoped to have Lenore Fletcher for a sister-in-law. She is handsome, accomplished, and rich. I don't suppose Miss Jones is any of the three."

"Probably a tall, lank, red-headed girl, who murders the English language whenever she opens her mouth."

"I don't think that," said Mrs. Holbrook. "Fred. is too fastidious to marry a vulgar or an ignorant girl. Well," and she sighed deeply, "he is married, and we must make the best of it. They will be home this evening, so I will go and put clean towels in the spare room."

There was little else thought or spoken of in the Holbrook mansion through the day, but the unexpected news from the only son and brother.

To say that the hearts of mother and sisters were bound up in Fred. would scarcely be true, for a life devoted to dress and fashionable follies had rather crushed out whatever of that old-fashioned organ they might once have possessed; but the family pride certainly centred around the handsome young son. Was he not junior partner in the flourishing firm of Holbrook & Holbrook, and certainly heir to Holbrook senior, his bachelor uncle and godfather? Had he not inherited a competency in his share of his father's estate, and been educated with every advantage, even to the finishing touch of a European tour? Were there not belles and heiresses in his own circle of friends to be wooed and won? And to think of his picking up some insignificant girl out West, to introduce to the world as Mrs. Frederick Holbrook!

No wonder Coralie brushed out her golden crimps with a vicious dash of the hair-brush, and tied her necktie with a sudden jerk, that brought her to her senses by threatening to strangle her. No wonder Ernestine made nine blue stitches instead of six red ones in her worsted work. No wonder Mrs. Holbrook dropped salt tears upon the toilet service she was arranging in the spare room.

Dinner was waiting—the ladies, all blondes, and all beauties, though differing in age, were in faultless costumes and equally faultless attitudes—when a latch-key rattled in the door, and Fred.'s hearty voice rang out, clear and cheerful:

"Here we are, Susie. Never mind the traps. Tom will attend to them." And the door of the drawing-room opened to admit Fred. and Fred.'s wife.

The ladies all rose and greeted the new-comers with a perfection of courtesy and gentleness of tone that were as cordial as lumps of ice, yet so perfectly well-bred, that, fret as he might, Fred. could find no room for fault-finding. Mrs. Frederick Holbrook was eased of her cloak and hat, an easy chair was drawn to the fire for her use, the weather was severely censured for chilling her hands and feet, and she was informed that dinner would be served immediately. But if the ladies had expected to crush the intruder under the weight of polite ceremony, they were disappointed.

The bride wore a plain steel-colored poplin, with narrow linen collar and cuffs; her hair, of rich dark brown, was gathered back from a fair, sweet face, and fell in natural curls upon her shoulders. Not an ornament broke the simplicity of her travelling dress, yet she could fairly rival the beauty of her sisters-in-law in their rich dinner dresses, with their elaborate coiffures and tasteful jewels. She met their advances with a quiet courtesy that accepted as much real welcome as was offered, but was as far from resentment as it was from affection.

"She is beautiful and refined," Coralie thought, half angrily; "and that travelling dress fits her as if it was cut in Paris."

It was a tedious, ceremonious dinner, and the evening was drearily long. In vain Fred. tried to produce a thaw by cheerful descriptions of his journey, and the incidents of his three months' absence; there was no one to second him, and he was heartily glad to urge his wife's fatigue after her long journey, as an excuse to break up the stiff family party.

Still Mr. Frederick Holbrook was wise in his resentment, determining to say nothing as yet, but trust to his wife's own powers to conciliate his offended relatives.

"They must love Susie when they know her," he thought, "and Coralie will certainly admire her music, while Ernestine will find her as neat a needle woman as she is herself."

But Fred. had not calculated upon one powerful ally against him—jealousy! In a very few weeks the sisters admitted to themselves that young Mrs. Holbrook was casting them in the shade in society. Her beauty was of a high, refined type, and her taste exquisite.

She could play well—not as well as Coralie; but when she sang, a hush would fall upon the most crowded room, to listen to her rich, pure voice.

Fred., busy all day, was satisfied in the evening to see his wife a favorite in society, and apparently happy at home, and asked no questions where no complaints were made. But Susie, gentle and sensitive, lived in a daily martyrdom of courteous cruelty.

Mrs. Holbrook, who had passed her life in a chronic whine for some twenty years, indulged in an additional tear, and more subdued inflection of her dismal tones, when she expanded upon her lost hopes for dear Fred., dealing side thrusts upon the sensitive heart that were full of pain. Coralie and Ernestine, in their frigid rebuffs whenever the young wife made any affectionate advances, soon convinced her of the vain hope of ever obtaining a sister's place in their hearts, and gradually she withdrew from the unequal contest, and isolated herself entirely. To some, this might have been an easy task; to Susie Holbrook it was a positive torture. She loved her husband with a deep true love that would have given love to all who belonged to him. An orphan, and a teacher for three years in a large seminary, she had craved home affection as only those can who have lost it. Having won love from every pupil under her care, she had trusted to her own patience and anxiety to please, to win it from her husband's mother and sisters. But when she failed, she had no cringing subservience to offer. Dignified, and with a gentle pride, she turned away and hid her sore disappointed heart under a courteous reserve as chilling as their own.

Matters were in this unpromising condition when Fred. was obliged to leave home for three months. His portion of the business had consisted, for several years, in travelling twice a year to Europe to select goods for the firm. There had been some talk of Susie's going, but the business required rapid journeys from point to point, with but little time for sight-seeing, and the season—midwinter—offered little attraction for a pleasure trip.

To say that Susie's heart sank at the prospect of three months in her new home, uncheered by Fred.'s presence, unsupported by his love, would give but a faint idea of her dismay, but she felt it was her proper place in his absence, and gave him no hint of her own feelings to sadden his departure.

Yet, when he was gone, in her lonely grief she did make another effort to win a daughter's and sister's place in the household. The failure was complete. Unchecked by the fear of Fred.'s displeasure, the three ladies allowed their jealousy and dislike full sway. If Susie brought her work to the sitting-room, where they were conversing, a dead silence met her, and coldest responses greeted her efforts to talk. If she opened the piano in the evening, Coralie, shrugging her shoulders, lamented in a loud aside the lost opportunities for practice.

There were no little domestic duties to draw them together. Well-trained servants attended to such matters, and either Coralie or Ernestine would have shuddered at the idea of touching a broom or a cooking utensil. Never had Susie encountered such a look of polite horror as greeted her when she owned to a knowledge of housewifely duties, and confessed she did all her own sewing.

Christmas festivities and New-year's receptions were over, when Mrs. Holbrook was taken sick, with what seemed to be a feverish cold. Maria, her maid, was her nurse, and Susie's offers of service being coldly declined, the lady grew worse, with little loving care to comfort her. Her own daughters declared they knew absolutely nothing of nursing duties, and Coralie herself was languid and feverish.

It fell with an indescribable shock upon all when the physician, entering the sitting-room one morning, informed them that Mrs. Holbrook had unmistakable symptoms of small-pox. Coralie fell into hysterics. Ernestine began to faint, but finding no one noticed her, concluded to recover. Susie spoke to the doctor:

"I have not been allowed to see Mrs. Holbrook. Is she very ill?"

"She is, to-day, and delirious. If you have not seen her, however, there is not the least danger of contagion. You had better, however, leave the house. Her daughters will be sufficient nurses."

"I!" shrieked Ernestine; "I nurse the small-pox! I shall go to my Aunt Mary's at once—this hour. You must hire a nurse;" and she left the room hastily.

"I shall go with Ernestine," said Coralie, going toward the door. But before she reached it she fell fainting in good earnest.

"Too late for you to escape, my lady," said the doctor; "you are already on the road to the sickness. Now, Mrs. Holbrook, you may run too. I will hire a nurse."

"I have no idea of running," said Susie gently, though her face was pale, and her voice shook a little. "I am a good nurse, Doctor. Tell me what you wish done."

But the doctor first tried to dissuade her. He knew a little of the position the young wife bore so patiently, and thought she strained her duty. But Susie was resolute. It was Fred.'s mother, Fred.'s sister, and they should have the chance for recovery that tender nursing would give them. She consented willingly to take every precaution the doctor advised, and entered at once upon her self-imposed task.

An hour later every frightened servant had left the house. Coralie had recovered from her insensibility in delirium, and the young nurse had to face her duties literally alone. For two days every detail of nursing, cooking and cleaning fell upon Susie's hands. Then two servants who had had the fearful disease were procured, and quarantined in the kitchen, a sort of depot of supplies being established half way between the sick-room and dining-room.

But the terrible days and nights of nursing fell for nearly a fortnight entirely upon Susie. Faithfully and tenderly the scorned, slighted daughter nursed the suffering mother, the insulted sister nursed the terrified Coralie. Reason returned to the invalids to meet a pale, weary face, full of most loving pity, ever beside them; to find soft, cool hands they had never grasped in affection, performing sickening duties for their comfort and welfare. It was no romantic bathing of fevered brows that was Susie's portion in the sick-room. The loathsome sickness called for such devotion, such positive heroism in a nurse, that the doctor himself stood amazed at the power in the slight figure, the resolution in the gentle nature.

No task was too revolting, no duty too disgusting, if the comfort of the invalids required its performance; and the room was kept always as sweet as was possible. It was touching to see how Susie fought for Coralie's beauty, applying cooling lotions to the burning, itching face, and striving to keep the gloss of the fever-dried hair.

Her reward began when her patients passed the crisis of their illness, and a nurse was finally procured to give her some assistance. Few words of repentance were spoken, but by every mute appeal did Coralie and her mother show their contrition and grateful love, and in the days of convalescence hearts were knit together that could never again grow cold to each other.

Fred. was coming home! That was the news that met Susie when her patients were pronounced out of danger, all risk of contagion over, and Ernestine recalled from her exile. Servants were engaged, the house put in order, and on the day the traveller returned, Mrs. Holbrook and Coralie came for the first time to the drawing-room. The three ladies, invalids and nurse, were all pale and weary looking, but thanks to constant care, the ordeal they had passed had left no disfiguring traces, and Susie had escaped the sickness.

The doctor met Fred. at the steamer, and prepared him for the change he would find, but even he could not explain the atmosphere of love that met the traveller in the circle he had left so cold and constrained. Even Ernestine was shamed into cordiality, when she realized how the burden she had so selfishly thrown aside, had been carried faithfully and tenderly by the sister whose love they had spurned, and whose home they had made miserable.

The years have passed quickly since the winter whose events I have recorded. Coralie and Ernestine preside over homes of their own, but the mother remains in the old house, the loved and loving grandma for Fred.'s children, the ever grateful companion of Fred.'s wife.

MABEL'S LESSON.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"Oh, dear!"

Little Mrs. Winter sighed wearily as she dried her hands on the snowy roller towel, and then turned dejectedly toward the laid tea-table.

"Mabel, that sounds unlike you. What's gone wrong to-day?"

Her husband's cheery voice made her start a step, for she had not seen him come in the little front gate. But a cloud settled still lower over her face, as she turned toward him.

"Nothing has gone wrong particularly; no more than it does every day."

Her voice had a gloom in its tones that was not calculated to cheer John Winter on his return from his day's work.

He looked at her in a surprised sort of way.

"Why, Mabel, surely you are not finding fault—you, my little industrious, prudent housewife?"

"But I'm *so* tired, John! To-day I've baked and ironed, and Eddie's been so cross. My back aches so I am positively sick."

He reached out his arms as if to caress her, but she drew back.

"There, the tea is boiling over."

She walked into the kitchen as if the weight of a nation's responsibilities rested on her shoulders; and if John Winter saw the fretful shadow on her pretty young face, he repressed the pain it occasioned him, and with a genial spirit of kindness resolved to make the best of it.

He drew the tea-table from its accustomed place in the centre of the room, near the open window.

"It will be cooler, Mabel, by the window, and it will amuse Eddie to look out. Come, wifie, take the rocking-chair and rest your back. I'll pour the tea, and then you can compare my handiness with your own skill."

He playfully seated her in the chair, and jumped their baby boy into his little high chair; and he did it with such a thorough kindliness and thoughtfulness that Mabel's heart gave a compunctious throb when she remembered what had clouded her spirit.

"There, Mrs. W., does your tea suit? If it does, just see if I have sugared the currants to your taste. There, lean back in your chair and tell me what is worrying you. I'll feed Eddie."

So kind, so considerate, with no thought or complaint of his own fatigue; and yet, as Mabel remembered the events of the afternoon, she felt her heart steeling against him.

"Mabel, aren't you going to talk? Have you been out to-day?"

Mrs. Winter's cheek flushed.

"This afternoon, for an hour only."

"Did you take Eddie, or leave him with mother?"

"I took him, of course, and carried him every step of the way to Amy Eldredge's and back. I *do* think you ought to get him a carriage."

She spoke impatiently; and when she mentioned Mrs. Eldredge's name, her husband's face grew stern.

"I need seek no further for the cause of your imaginary troubles. Whenever you go to Mrs. Eldredge's, you always come home dissatisfied."

Mrs. Winter spoke back quickly, excitedly.

"'Imaginary troubles' indeed! As if doing all my own work, all my sewing, and taking care of Eddie, wasn't real enough. I wish to Heaven they *were* imaginary."

"*Mabel!*"

Her husband's voice was sterner than she ever had heard it. She saw his face was grave and pained.

"You needn't say '*Mabel!*' I mean what I say, and you know I am driven to death with work I never did until I was married."

"If you regret it, Mabel, I am sorry. You know why we are living so prudently; you know we want to buy the house and lot next spring, and I remember you proposed to dispense with a girl until we had saved enough money to pay a large cash amount."

"I know I did; but—" She hesitated, and blushed guiltily.

"Let me finish your remark for you, Mabel. You have seen the wife of a man this afternoon who can afford to give her a thousand dollars where I could not give you ten. You have brooded over the thought that Mrs. Eldredge was no richer, as a girl, than you were; that she married a wealthy man—the very one *you* were engaged to once, who would have surrounded you with all the luxuries she enjoys. You have contrasted her position, the wife of a rich, dissipated gambler, with your own, the beloved helpmate of an honest, hard-working man; the mother of a darling babe, Mabel! *I* wouldn't change places with Richard Eldredge for ten million worlds."

He ceased speaking in his wonted tender tones, and as Mabel lifted Eddie from his chair, John went up to her and wound his arms caressingly around her.

"Forget her, dear, and remember how much we have to be thankful for. Why, this precious baby here is worth an eternity's praises."

But discontent had taken deep and sudden root in Mabel's breast, and she began gathering up her dishes.

"Well, I must go to work again, I suppose. There, baby, be still your fretting! I declare you drive me frantic with your incessant 'ma-ma.' I wish you'd keep quiet one good while, for a change."

The wee little fellow cried all the more piteously, as his mother undressed him with lowering brow, and rapid, unloving hands; and John Winter's face grew grave and sad again.

A picturesque cottage, standing in the centre of tastefully laid out walks; pleasant bay-windows, where creeping vines lent a cool green shade without, and draping lace a purity within; wide piazzas, where stood rustic oaken chairs.

It was a pleasant spot, and on that bright September morning John Winter and Mabel took possession of their new home.

Everything was in order, and a cozily laid breakfast table awaited them.

"Mabel, come. Let us welcome each other home."

But the sombre-robed figure was kneeling by the sofa, in an agony of bitterest tears.

Kindly, tenderly he bent over her bowed head.

"Mabel, don't cry so. Tears are of no avail to call back our little one."

"Oh, I know, I know! But, John, it's not home where Eddie isn't, where his little feet never will patter across the new carpets. Oh, John, if you only knew the dreams I've had of this time—when we'd go in the new house, and enjoy the new things; and we'd have a stout woman to do the work, so I could dress little Eddie and ride him out in his little carriage! Oh, John, and now we haven't got him!"

The mother's voice was pitiful in its touching wail of despair.

"And only think," she went on brokenly, "that only yesterday, the last day in the old house, we buried him. Oh, John, John, I can't leave him under the ground any longer. I know he's afraid to stay there all alone. I feel that I am neglecting him so."

John's mouth quivered, but he laid a firm hand on his wife's shoulder.

"He's not alone, dear. Come, shall we go over the house?"

"Wait just one moment, while I tell you something. Do you remember that night, John, that Eddie was taken with the croup—the day I took him to Amy Eldredge's, and he caught the cold that killed him? John, you have not forgotten the awful, awful wish I made that I would my duties were imaginary? It has come home to me, John, in a far different way from what I meant. Now shall I go with you?"

But Mabel had learned her lesson. She never afterward envied others their blessings, but thanked God for what He gave her.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A LITTLE five-year-old boy was being instructed in morals by his grandmother. The old lady told him that all such terms as "by golly," "by jingo," "by thunder," etc., were only little oaths, and but little better than other profanities. In fact, she said, he could tell a profane oath by the prefix "by." All such were oaths. "Well, then, grandmother," said the little hopeful, "is 'by telegraph,' which I see in the newspapers, swearing?" "No," said the old lady, "that's only lying."

"HOW much will it cost to get that watch repaired?" asked a sailor, as he handed his time-piece to a watchmaker, who, after examining it, said, "The expense of repairing that watch will be more than the original cost." "I don't care for that," said the sailor; "I'll give you double the original cost, for I gave a fellow a blow on the head for the watch, and I'll give you two for repairing it."

ONE of the passengers upon the Sound steamer *Metis*, at the time of the disaster, was an exceedingly nervous man, who, while floating in the water, imagined what his friends would do to acquaint his wife with his fate. Saved at last, he rushed to the telegraph office, and sent this message: "Dear P., I am saved. Break it gently to my wife!"

A PHILADELPHIAN had a quarrel with his wife. She sweetened her coffee with laudanum. The bereaved husband "realized" on an insurance policy on her life, then recovered heavy damages from the apothecary who sold her the laudanum, and now spends his evenings with a lovely widow, who soothes him by singing,

"Weep not! We may be happy yet."

WHEN an Indian comes before a Nebraska Court for trial there is difficulty in finding a jury. The other day, a juror summoned on the panel to try an aborigine, being asked if he had any prejudice against Indians, replied, "No; only I 've been chased by 'em, have been in several battles with 'em, and would hang every bloody villain of 'em at sight." He was excused.

A PREACHER, one slippery, frosty morning going home with one of his elderly members, the old gentleman slipped and fell. When the minister saw that he was not hurt, he said, "My friend, sinners stand on slippery places." "Yes," replied the old man, looking at the preacher, "I see they do, but I can't."

A WESTERN editor, speaking of a disa[illegible]pointed politician, says, "He no more rides ov[illegible] the prairie singing the songs of victory, but has gone into oblivion and the bee culture, and goes about with his eyes fixed on the ground, as though looking for a soft spot on which 'to lay him down and die.'"

A MERCHANT in a Connecticut village recently kissed the hired girl while his wife was looking at him through the window. "It is thought that he 'll be out again about Thanksgiving," is the comment made by the local paper that reported the case.

THE name of a European artist, which is spelled Wieniawischktchi, gave his English friends who wished to pronounce it great trouble, until a wag suggested that the exact pronunciation was wine-and-whisky, and then everybody easily swallowed it.

A GENTLEMAN who has just returned from Europe says he learned one thing by his voyage, and that is, that a man may be drunk as much as he pleases on board ship, and his stagger will be attributed to sea-sickness or the roll of the vessel.

"COME, go to bed, Freddie; you see it is sundown, and the little chickens all go to roost at that time." "Yes, mamma, but the old hen goes with them."

IT is said that if Midas touched anything, it turned to gold. Nowadays, if you touch a politician with gold, he'll turn to anything.

A CARPENTER in love is not apt to be as handsome as his sweetheart because he is almost always a good deal planer.

MRS. SNIDKINS says her husband is a three-handed man—right hand, left hand, and a little behind hand.

IT is said that iron is a good tonic for debilitated young ladies; that may be so, but ironing is a better one.

WHY should one be cautious about confiding a secret to his relations? Because "blood will tell."

IT doesn't hurt snuff to pinch it.

CURRENT ITEMS.

As a physician, living in New Bedford, was riding toward Tiverton on Monday evening of last week, a man suddenly appeared at his side, presented a pistol, and exclaimed, "Your money or your life!" The doctor raised his right arm, and the pistol was discharged. The ball grazed his hat and passed through the fleshy part of his left arm, below the elbow. While this was going on, another man seized the heads of his horses and attempted to stop them. The animals became frightened, and ran, leaving both the robbers behind, who fired at the doctor, but without effect.

THE telegraph has been found useful in a curious way in Connecticut. A lunatic, who was formerly an operator, lately escaped from the asylum at Hartford, and no trace of him could be found until, one night, an old associate of his recognized his touch in the click of the instrument at his side. The message came from Wallingford, and there, sure enough, the missing man was found, having tried his hand at his old craft, and thereby revealed his whereabouts.

A LAME girl, who had not for fourteen years once left the third-story back room in which she lived, was among those who participated in the late children's excursions in Philadelphia. When carried to the Park, she asked what the grass and trees were, and had to be told the names of the most common objects. She lay on the grass all day, drinking in the air and sunshine, and was seen to weep softly every little while from pure joy.

A NAVAL torpedo, invented for the purpose of blowing enemies' ships into the air, was exploded at Newport the other day, under a heavy raft, with a result which, as a reporter says, "gave the Christian gentlemen who witnessed it perfect satisfaction, as they saw that by its instrumentality they could give their Christian enemies quick transit to another and a better world than this frail orb of ours."

ON Wednesday of last week, while a party of the inmates of the Massachusetts State Lunatic Asylum, in charge of a keeper, were in the woods near Lake Quinsigamond, one of the lunatics suddenly made a dash from the group and threw himself into the lake, swam out about a hundred yards, and then sank and was drowned, without making the slightest effort to save himself.

A WOMAN met her death in England recently under very singular circumstances. She was cracking nuts by striking them with a knife, when a small piece of nutshell flew into her eye. She did not take much notice of it at the time, but several days afterward the eye became very painful and inflammation set in, which was followed by delirium, and the poor woman died.

A HORSE driven by a lady ran away, in Worcester, on Thursday of last week, and plunging over a precipice thirty feet high, came down with the buggy to which he was attached, and its occupant, all in a heap. The lady was but slightly injured, the horse was not hurt at all, but the buggy was badly damaged.

CEDAR CREEK, which flowed under the famous Natural Bridge of Virginia, has entirely disappeared, to the great indignation of the people of that vicinity. Three leaks have been found in the bed of the stream, through which it is supposed the water must have poured into some far underground channel.

ANTOINE GIMBREDE, a French half-breed Indian, living near Pembina, Minn., was attacked by two old wildcats and three young ones, and though he killed and disabled all of them, and succeeded in getting to his cabin, he was so dreadfully torn and mangled that he died in a few hours.

A MAN was run over by a railroad train near Providence, and his head was severed from his body as neatly as it could have been done with an ax.

AN old lady of West Virginia, aged ninety-eight, has figured up three hundred and seventy-six descendants, with three States yet to hear from.

THE Methodist church in Charleston, S. C., was robbed of all its chairs and seats, one night recently, by some sacrilegious thief.

A FAMILY of eight persons was found living in one little room, in Fall River, and all the children, six in number, sick in bed.

A LYNCHING party in Southern Kansas lately seized and hung a party of horse-stealers, consisting of seven men and four women.

A HORSE in Barton county, Ga., recently knocked over a bee-hive and was stung to death by the enraged insects.

THE stove manufacturers of Troy have made two hundred thousand stoves this year.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

BY GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

He owed no debt he could not pay,
He envied not another's pelf,
He chose the strait and narrow way,
He loved his neighbor as himself.
He was an honest man—
A good Samaritan.

He gently raised the fallen up,
For his brave arms were strong and soft;
He gave to them the crust and cup,
And counselled them to look aloft.
A heart beat out the plan
Of this Samaritan.

He saw the victim in his cell,
He cheered the toiler at his toil,
He stood in storms where soldiers fell,
And dressed their wounds with balm and oil.
What hero's braver than
A good Samaritan?

When party strife, like surging seas,
Threatens to rise and overwhelm,
Our deeds, like drops of oil, appease,
And we are masters at the helm,
When each adopts the plan
Of the Samaritan.

Our life is worth the living, when
We make it better than our creeds,
With charity toward all men,
And crown it with unselfish deeds.
Let's copy while we scan
The Good Samaritan.

* * *

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A NEW VIEW OF THE CASE.

The Waldemar town house was wrapped in silence. The hour was past midnight. The lights burned dimly in hall and library, for Lord Waldemar had not returned from Westminster, and would probably yet be absent for some hours. The hall porter had retired from his post for the night. Darrel Moer was in his own room, his thoughts busy with the past and the future. Many grave problems were pressing heavily upon his mind, but he was well content with his prospects.

In Miss Floyd's chamber, the heiress and Mrs. Watchley awaited the promised visit of Lord Waldemar's business manager. Miss Floyd's fair face wore a sullen and fretful expression. She was in a rebellious and angry mood, Mrs. Watchley having undertaken to lecture her upon her recent conduct toward Lord Waldemar, and her outburst of wrath had effectually quelled her companion, who sat weeping, and regarding the girl with furtive glances of apprehension.

The heiress, in a dressing-gown of pale pink cashmere embroidered with white silk daisies, and with her hair half escaped from comb and band, stood before the bright fire, her darkening face half turned toward Mrs. Watchley.

"Why should Mr. Grimrod come to my room at this hour?" exclaimed Miss Floyd, knitting her brows. "I dismissed my maid an hour since, and yet he keeps me waiting. How dared he speak to me in that manner in the drawing-room to-night? I am nearly determined to refuse to see him if he comes."

"You dare not refuse to see him, Hilda," said Mrs. Watchley grimly. "He has a good reason for all he does or says, you may be certain. You have had your own way all your life long, but in Grimrod you've found your master."

The girl's face reddened as if she had been struck a blow. She was about to reply angrily, when a low and cautious rap was heard, the door opened gently, and the manager stole into the room, turning the key in the lock behind him.

He was dressed in his usual close-fitting black garb, and now wore list slippers, and a snug little black skull-cap. His face was as impassive as usual, cool, calm, and inscrutable, but there was a red glint in his eyes that showed Mrs. Watchley that he was in no pleasant mood.

He addressed himself to the elder lady without preliminary, and without taking any notice of Miss Floyd.

"I am surprised, Madam," he said, "with the result of your training. Is this girl the gentle creature you used to write me about, in such strong terms of praise? Is this girl the high-bred, refined, and cultured lady of whom you wrote with such enthusiasm? Whatever she was by nature, you have spoiled her."

Mrs. Watchley broke out into hysterical sobbing, while Hilda looked the astonishment she felt at the terms applied to herself by Grimrod.

"I have petted and humored her," said Mrs. Watchley, in a broken, incoherent voice, "but it was because she never could bear to be crossed in anything. She always would have her own way from babyhood. She was born willful, and headstrong, and selfish, and what is born in one cannot be easily eradicated even by assiduous training. And—and I have loved her, with all her faults."

"A pretty creature you have made of her!" said Grimrod, his lip curling. "Is it for such a result as this that I have toiled and schemed all these long years? One might say, Mrs. Watchley, that you have done your best to involve all three of us in a common ruin, with your doting fondness and your foolish submission to this foolish girl's whims. If we are ruined, remember to take a fair share of credit to yourself."

He turned abruptly toward the girl.

"Hilda!" he said, in the tone of a master, the red spark in his eyes flickering. "What did you mean by your insane conduct below this evening? Why did you break out upon Lord Waldemar in that manner, when you knew that to-morrow would set you free from his authority forever? Fool! Little, miserable fool! Could you not have restrained your temper for once?"

His taunting words, his tone and manner, stirred up all the evil in the girl's nature.

"How dare you speak to me in that way?" she flashed. "I will summon the household. I will have you ejected from my room. Lord Waldemar shall dismiss you from his service."

She bounded toward the bell-pull. Grimrod was there before her, and he tossed the tasselled cord over an adjacent picture-frame, placing it beyond her reach.

"At least, I can scream," said the girl, literally foaming with rage. "I will—"

Grimrod seized her arm in a rough grip and forced her into a chair, standing over her with a face that awed her into sudden calmness.

"You will make an outcry at your peril," he exclaimed. "Girl! you are in my power. I have come to your room to-night to teach you that I am your master, and that you are only a puppet in my hands to obey my will! Do you understand?"

"You think, perhaps, that the possession of those eight letters which I wrote to Antonio Frivoli place me in your power," said Miss Floyd, in a choking voice. "Frivoli is dead, and the letters are not worth the paper they are written on. Grandpapa would think you a pitiful sneak if you were to bring those letters to him. I don't care if you publish them in every paper in England. Grandpapa could not be more angry at me than he is now, but as I should tell him the whole story, he would dismiss you on the spot, like an unfaithful servant as you are. Bah! I'm not afraid of you;" and her voice grew stronger, and her eyes began to flash anew. "Let go my arm! Take your hand off me!"

Grimrod obeyed. The girl sprang again to her feet. She began to think that she had in her turn awed him.

"You are right in your remarks about the letters," said the manager coolly. "I cannot use them without injuring myself. Lord Waldemar would never forgive me for publishing them. It is true I can take the letters to his lordship and tell him that I bought them of a foreign adventurer, but it is not my purpose to further incense the Baron against you. We will say that the letters are useless to me. And yet I have still a claim upon you which will bend you to my will."

"You refer to that secret which Frivoli declared to me—that I am not the real Hilda Floyd?" said the girl, unconsciously lowering her voice to a whisper.

The manager assented.

"I don't care the snap of my finger for that," said Miss Floyd. "If I am not the real heiress, who is ever to know the fact? The real Hilda is dead, or so lost that she will never be found. You will never dare to declare the truth. You will never dare to go to Lord Waldemar and say, 'My lord, this young lady is not your granddaughter.' You have affirmed that I am his lordship's descendant. You told him that the proofs of my identity are overwhelming. If you were to make such a statement to him, he would turn upon you and accuse you—not me—of the imposition."

Grimrod seemed surprised at this display of keen reasoning faculties.

"You are by no means stupid, girl," he said, not ill pleased.

"I rather think not," observed Miss Floyd, with growing complacency. "But I believe that story of Frivoli to be false. You think to trade upon the lie. I am not a child in intellect, Mr. Grimrod. I have the peculiar marks upon me that distinguish the real Hilda Floyd. How did I come by the dagger-shaped birth-mark, and the scar on my wrist, if they are not legitimate? You see that you cannot impose upon me, nor trade upon my fears. Frivoli frightened me that night, and in my haste and excitement I believed his words. I have thought them over enough since to convince myself that he spoke falsely, thinking to intimidate me."

"It would look so," said the manager.

Miss Floyd's spirits rose at the apparent concession, and her face resumed its supercilious expression.

"You came in here calling yourself my master!" she exclaimed. "You have reckoned without your host, Mr. Grimrod. By this time you must have discovered that I am your mistress. If you haven't, allow me to remind you that I can denounce you any day as the murderer of Antonio Frivoli, who died so mysteriously at the little inn in Yorkshire. And I am perfectly willing to so denounce you, if you presume again. I will write to the coroner at Wolverton and cause Frivoli's body to be exhumed and examined by medical experts, and I myself will testify, if I am driven to it, that he left my room to go with you to your house upon that night in which he died. I *know* that you poisoned him to death; I know this as if I had seen it, and I am not afraid to so testify."

Grimrod's face became covered with a vivid pallor, but the flickering spark in his eyes burned now steadily and fiercely, and his countenance was impassive as ever.

"Hilda, Hilda!" moaned Mrs. Watchley. "You don't know what you say."

"Let her talk, Madam," said the manager, with his Mephistophelean smile. "The babble of the young is always pleasant to me, and even babble like this is hardly tiresome. The girl's spirit is fine; her sense perhaps not so good."

Miss Floyd colored.

"My 'sense' is too keen to permit me to become the prey of a schemer like you," she said sharply. "I have got the upper hand, and I mean to keep it. You dare not say anything to Lord Waldemar against me, and I dare denounce you as Frivoli's murderer! Who is master now? I desire you to relieve me of your presence immediately. When I become Baroness Waldemar, I'll dismiss you—I'll have you kicked out like some troublesome dog. Now go."

She pointed imperiously toward the door.

"One moment, my dear young lady," said the manager coolly. "Before you summon the servants to expel me from your room, and before you decide irrevocably upon having me 'kicked out like some troublesome dog,' when you become Lady Waldemar, I have a few words to say to you. In the first place, when I told you that there was a flaw in your claims upon Lord Waldemar, I told you the truth. Frivoli was right. You are not the real Hilda Floyd."

"I don't believe you."

"You will, before I shall have finished. The real Hilda Floyd, if alive, is living out a peasant existence somewhere. She may be already married; she may be a domestic servant, a 'hewer of wood and drawer of water,' all unconscious of her claims to a wealthy and ancient barony. But you are a usurper, an impostor, and no Floyd at all."

His tones impressed Hilda.

"Who then am I?" she asked involuntarily.

A strange smile curled the manager's lips. He glowered at her as he said slowly:

"Your real name is Hilda Grimrod. You are my daughter!"

The girl uttered a cry of rage and incredulity.

"It is true," affirmed the manager calmly. "You are my daughter, the sole fruit of my marriage to a lady who died at your birth."

"It is impossible. I won't believe it—I won't."

"When my wife died," continued Grimrod, unheeding her wild exclamation, "I took you up to Leeds myself, your nurse being ill, and consigned you to the care of your aunt, your mother's sister, a widow lady just then in infirm health."

"My—my aunt!"

"Yes, your aunt, Mrs. Watchley."

The girl seemed paralyzed.

"Mrs. Watchley had never visited at my house," said Grimrod, "owing to the state of her health, which at that time was somewhat precarious. She assumed the whole charge of you, however, and I returned to the Manor. When you were about a year old, there arrived from Wallace Floyd's young widow a letter addressed to Squire Floyd, stating the fact that she had a child, with certain marks upon its person, and that this child was a girl, and it happened by a singular coincidence that the child was nearly of the same age with my daughter. I copied the letter, and hid the original in Squire Floyd's safe. Six months later came the letter announcing Mrs. Floyd's death. I hid that letter also, not destroying it, as the Squire had commanded me to do with all letters coming from his son or his son's wife. I gave these letters the appearance of having been unopened. I pretended about that time that my child had died. I went to Leeds, told Mrs. Watchley of a plan I had conceived, and secured her coöperation. I remembered the dagger-shaped birth-mark on Wallace Floyd's arm, having seen it more than once, and I inflicted a wound with a knife upon my child's arm that would be likely to correspond with that birth-mark. I also inflicted a wound upon your wrist answering to the description of the wound on the arm of little Hilda Floyd."

"It is all true!" groaned Mrs. Watchley. "Every word is true."

Miss Floyd sat motionless and speechless, merely staring from one to the other of her relatives.

"I sent Mrs. Watchley with my child to Innsbruck," continued the manager, "with instructions to bring you up as a lady, calling you Hilda Floyd, and teaching you from your earliest childhood that you were the granddaughter of a rich Yorkshire Squire, to whose fortune you would some day succeed. I gave Mrs. Watchley a liberal allowance of money. You were provided with the best teachers and governesses. I never went near you in all those years, contenting myself with your aunt's account of your progress, and with the photographs of you which she frequently sent me. If the real Hilda Floyd had been brought to England by her nurse, I should have found means to send the woman away without permitting her to see the Squire, and I would have assumed charge of the child. But she never came. She probably died at Malta, or on the Mediterranean. When my lord sent me abroad in search of his granddaughter this year, I pretended to make a thorough search for her everywhere. In truth, I did search for some trace of the real Hilda. Finding none, I went to Innsbruck, and brought you and your aunt home to England. I never intended to tell you all this, but you have forced me to speak. I have told you the exact truth, and I swear to it!"

Hilda could no longer affect a doubt she did not feel. She knew that Grimrod had told her the truth—that he was her own father.

A change as deep as it was sudden manifested itself in her manners.

"Do—do you suppose Lord Waldemar suspects the imposture?" she whispered.

"Certainly not. How should he? You do not look like me. He thinks that you resemble the Arlyns—ha, ha! If he did suspect the imposture, you may be sure that this house would not be big enough to hold him in his wrath."

"Does Darrel Moer suspect it?"

"No, indeed. No one suspects it but we three. The suspicion of it was fatal to Frivoli. Darrel Moer would not marry you if he had the faintest suspicion of the truth. He is the true heir. I am satisfied that the real Hilda is dead. I have schemed all your life to make you Baroness Waldemar. To make your position secure beyond all peradventure, you must marry the heir. Once Darrel Moer's wife, you will be doubly the heiress. Now you comprehend why I have urged on your marriage with him."

"Yes, I comprehend."

"Should the true nurse employed by Mrs. Floyd ever turn up, she could not harm you if you were entrenched as Darrel Moer's wife," said the manager. "I have thought of everything. All will be secure when you are once safely married to Moer. My father was manager to the Floyds before me. He was never tired of rehearsing to me the glories of the family. He taught me that to serve them was next to being a Floyd. When I grew up and took his place at his death, and knew the wealth of the family, my soul was filled with bitterness and envy that they should have all, and that I should be their servant. I would have sold my soul to be owner of Floyd Manor. And when an opportunity occurred to foist a child of mine in the place of the real heiress, I was ready to do it. You know my success. My lord trusts me as his one faithful friend in all the world. He could not even dream of my treachery to him. Nelson Grimrod is to him the incarnation of dog-like fidelity."

The manager's lip curled in a sneer as he concluded.

"I can hardly realize all this," murmured Hilda.

"No, very likely. You see now, Hilda, that your interests and mine are identical. We can stand by each other. I will befriend you in this marriage, and if Lord Waldemar remains incensed against you, I will support you and your husband until you come into the barony. I shall find my happiness in your exalted position. Shall we be friends, Hilda?"

The girl hesitated. She felt at that moment as if she hated Grimrod with all her soul. She felt inclined to defy him, knowing that although he had exalted her to her present position, he could not abase her without ruining himself. But she knew also that she might need his aid, pecuniary or otherwise, and policy and selfishness conquered passion, and she said:

"Yes, we will be friends. Let what I have said be forgotten."

She held out her hand to him. He pressed it in his.

"You must apologize to-morrow to Lord Waldemar," he remarked. "Make your peace with him, if possible. Humble yourself to him, Hilda, and if you can force a few tears, so much the better. His friendship is greatly to be desired by you, for he may live thirty years yet."

"Unless he should die by 'visitation of Providence,' as Frivoli did," said the girl, with a furtive glance up into his face. "But of course that could not be possible. Lord Waldemar is a more conspicuous personage than was the unknown foreign adventurer. I'll make my peace with his lordship to-morrow. Having caught a glimpse of the stake, I'll play every winning card I own. You can trust me to restore myself to his lordship's favor."

CHAPTER XLIV.

HILDA AND MOER MARRIED.

It was two o'clock in the morning when Grimrod stole back to his own room as silently as he had stolen from it two hours earlier. The lights still burned dimly in the lower rooms. Lord Waldemar had not yet come home. Darrel Moer was asleep in his room, and the manager believed that his midnight visit to the rooms of the heiress was a secret from all save Hilda and Mrs. Watchley.

At the usual hour the next morning, Darrel Moer and Grimrod joined the ladies in the breakfast room. Lord Waldemar would not rise until noon, and Hilda was therefore obliged to defer her apologies to his lordship until after her marriage.

At nine o'clock Grimrod left the house to visit a solicitor who attended to certain investments of his funds, but promised Moer to be present at the church to give away the bride.

At ten o'clock Darrel Moer, faultlessly attired, also went out, after enjoining Hilda to meet him at St. Jude's punctually at eleven.

Almost immediately after his departure, Mrs. Watchley announced to the housekeeper in a casual way that she should not be in at luncheon; the day being so fine, she had decided to take her charge to Sydenham upon a little excursion.

"Miss Floyd has not yet seen the Crystal Palace, Mrs. Poss," she condescended to explain, "and there is a fine flower-show there to-day, I see by the morning papers. We shall be home to dinner, be good enough to say to Lord Waldemar. And now order the carriage for Miss Floyd, please, to convey us to Victoria station."

Mrs. Poss hastened to comply.

At half past ten the carriage was at the door, and Miss Floyd and Mrs. Watchley swept down the grand staircase and made their way to the vehicle.

The April day was unusually fine, there being a bright sunshine, and an atmosphere unusually mild and clear for London. Miss Floyd was attired in an elegant carriage dress of heavy pale blue silk, made with a train, and richly ornamented with white lace. She wore a jacket of pale blue velvet, also trimmed with white lace, and a coquettish little white lace hat, enwreathed with blue forget-me-nots, crowned the wonderful structure of her fair hair. Boots and gloves alike of pale blue kid, with white buttons, completed her toilet.

"She do look like a bride," murmured Mrs. Poss, peeping out at her basement window, in a glow of admiration, "though of course a bride do wear white. I should think she would spoil all her nice clothes in the railway coach, though, to be sure, what is expense to the quality?"

Mrs. Watchley was dressed in a mode-colored moire, and wore an Indian shawl. She followed Miss Floyd into the carriage, settling her voluminous draperies to her satisfaction, the footman put up the steps and mounted to his place, and drove to the Victoria station.

Here the ladies alighted.

The footman piloted the ladies into the waiting-room, procured their tickets, and conducted them to a first-class coach.

"Train starts in seven minutes, Miss Floyd," he observed, as he closed the coach door. "You will have this coach to yourselves. At what hour will you have the carriage come for you this evening?"

"At six, James. You need not wait now. The horses were restive," said Hilda.

The footman bowed and retreated.

He had scarcely disappeared when Mrs. Watchley summoned a guard to open the door.

"I do believe I have forgotten my pocket-book," she exclaimed. "How provoking! We shall have to take a later train. Come, Hilda."

The two ladies alighted and walked along the platform, holding up their trains.

"That was cleverly managed," said Mrs. Watchley, as they passed the waiting-room and gained the street. "The carriage is gone. No one can inform Lord Waldemar of our movements, Hilda, and consequently he can't appear at the church to stop the wedding."

She signalled a passing cab and gave the order, "To St. Jude's," assisted Hilda into the vehicle, herself following. They arrived at the church in good time, ordered the cabman to wait, and passed in alone beneath the stone archway, through the vestibule into the great, dim church, with its grand memorial windows, its quaint, carved pulpit and reading desk, its ornamented chancel rail, and its tender flood of rosy lights contrasting with dusky shadows.

Grimrod and Darrel Moer were in waiting near the door. The former offered his arm to Hilda, who walked beside him up the aisle, her long train sweeping the carpet with silken rustle. Moer gave his support to Mrs. Watchley, and they also marched up toward the chancel.

The rector and curate were in waiting. The former, in the robes of his office, was reading the marriage license, which Moer had just placed in his hands. He looked up in some apparent surprise at the smallness of the bridal party, but resumed his reading, perusing the document to its close.

Moer was secretly anxious and uneasy. He feared at this last moment that the beautiful Hungarian Countess might appear to stop his marriage, albeit she could know nothing of his present purpose. He feared that Sir Hugh Tregaron might burst in upon him and forbid the marriage, and avow his—Moer's—real character to Miss Floyd and Grimrod.

"Once let either Hilda or the manager suspect the Glint marriage, or the fact that Carmine Hoff is my lawful and living wife, and my game is up," he said to himself desperately. "I wish the words were said that bind Hilda Floyd to me. I am impatient to secure my heiress."

The curate motioned to the two principal actors to take their proper places. The impressive marriage ceremony was commenced. Grimrod, when called upon, gave away the bride. Moer produced the wedding ring. Mrs. Watchley cried softly behind her lace handkerchief, as was proper and fashionable. The contracting pair knelt at the right moment, made the responses at the right moment, and arose, after the clergyman's prayer—man and wife!

As the benediction of the clergyman fell upon the wedded pair, Darrel Moer's heart gave a great leap of exultation.

He had had grand dreams all his life of wedding some titled and wealthy lady, and he believed that he had now reached their fulfillment.

"I am secure," he thought, as he arose to his feet—"perfectly secure. I can manage Honor, in one way or another. As to the Countess, she may not dare to expose me. I am sure now to succeed to the barony of Waldemar, in right of my wife, if not in my own right, and I am sure of wealth unlimited. After all, I've done well."

The thoughts of his bride, as she shook out the folds of her dress, were not less pleasing.

"I am secure," she said in her own heart delightedly. "If I do not succeed to the barony of Waldemar in my own right, I shall do so in right of my husband. Let what will happen, my fortune is assured!"

The bridal party adjourned to the vestry, and appended their names to the official entry of their marriage in the church register. Then Grimrod and Mrs. Watchley congratulated the bridegroom, and wished all happiness to the bride. Moer having paid a handsome fee to the officiating clergyman, there was nothing to cause them to linger, and Grimrod conducted his party into the outer church.

As the manager glanced back, and a flood of ruddy light fell full upon his face, Hilda noticed that he looked ill. His face was actually haggard, even while, with the force of his powerful will, he showed a smile upon his lips. He looked, indeed, as if some great trouble had suddenly come upon him, and Hilda's thoughts flew to her great secret. Was exposure of her false position threatened?

"Where are we to go now?" asked Grimrod, halting at the church door.

"To Victoria station," said Mrs. Watchley promptly, not having observed the change in Grimrod. "We must go to the Crystal Palace and have a whole day to ourselves. I have telegraphed to have an elegant dinner in a private room."

"I wish we had chosen some more retired place in which to spend the day," said the manager. "So many bridal parties go to Sydenham that I fear we shall be mistaken for one. And to-day there is a flower-show, and all West End will be there. Still, if we have a private room and keep to ourselves, there may be no harm done."

"There's to be a concert and fireworks this evening," said Mrs. Watchley, "but we cannot stay for them. We shall get away from the Palace before the crowd arrives."

They entered the cab and drove to Victoria station.

A train was on the point of departure. They secured a compartment of a first-class coach, and steamed swiftly down to Sydenham, alighting in the Palace grounds.

They did not immediately go into the Palace but wandered about the lawns and gardens, surveying the ponds and the stone fac-similes of antediluvian monsters, and finally made their way up the long avenue, and into the cool building.

Grimrod had been very silent since leaving London. Even Moer saw that there was something amiss with him, and his guilty soul gave a great throb of apprehension.

"Suppose we go to our private room," he said. "We are all tired, and the exhibition rooms are crowded already."

The others agreed, and the party proceeded to the dining-rooms, gave their names, and were ushered into a cozy little parlor which had been especially prepared for their reception.

"We will retain the room until six o'clock," said Moer, giving the waiter a handsome gratuity. "Let dinner be served at three."

The waiter withdrew. Moer locked the door after him.

Mrs. Watchley and Hilda removed their bonnets and wrappings. Grimrod walked to the window. Moer followed him.

"What's the matter, Grimrod?" he asked, clapping the manager on the shoulder. "You act as if you were in serious trouble."

Hilda and Mrs. Watchley, each in secret perturbation, and each wearing false smiles, drew near.

"I am in trouble," said Grimrod, "and I may as well own the fact to you, particularly as my trouble concerns you both equally with myself."

Moer and Hilda alike started. Each thought of his and her terrible secret.

"I have needed all my strength of will to keep my distress to myself until this moment," continued the manager. "I kept it from you at church because you were so absorbed in each other you had no glances for me. But you must know the truth now. I have employed a solicitor, doing business near Temple Gardens, to invest my money for me—the savings of many years as Squire Floyd's and Lord Waldemar's business agent, and the result of successful speculations upon my own part. He embarked my money in two enterprises, one in India, one in Australia, guaranteeing me twenty per cent. profit. Yesterday came letters to him from both quarters. The two bubbles had burst. The diamond mine in India contains no diamonds; the railway company in Australia, in which my money was invested, after paying handsome dividends last year, has just failed, paying not one penny in the pound."

"I am surprised!" exclaimed Moer. "I don't see how you could have been so taken in, Grimrod."

"I was in too great haste to increase my fortune, and so lost all," said the manager. "I am not the first to be taken in. The enterprises seemed genuine and conducted by well-known honest men. I have now only my salary as Lord Waldemar's business manager."

There was a grave silence, finally broken by Moer.

"Then you can't keep us in luxury as you promised?" he inquired.

"No; my money is gone."

"What then are we to do?"

"You must make friends with your uncle. All your dependence is upon Lord Waldemar. If he casts you off, you must share the fate of Wallace Floyd, or live from hand to mouth until his lordship dies," said the manager gloomily.

The others looked appalled at this prospect.

"My uncle will fly into a rage when he learns that we are married," said Moer. "He will declare that we have cheated and mocked him. I own, Grimrod, my chief dependence has been upon you and your money. I shall not dare go to my uncle this evening and tell him that Hilda and I have been to church together, after his absolute refusal to allow us to marry under three years."

"What are we to do then?" said Hilda, repeating Moer's question of the previous moment.

"You must apologize to your grandfather to-day, Hilda," said the manager, with decision. "We are in no condition now to dictate terms. You must humble yourself to him, and try to win his affection. That is the first step. The announcement of your marriage to Darrel Moer must not be made until you shall have ingratiated yourself with Lord Waldemar, even if you are obliged to keep the secret a month or more."

"That looks reasonable," said Moer. "I am willing to wait a month for my bride, if the delay is necessary. Until we can win his lordship to some expression of kindly feeling for you, Hilda, you shall be to me still Miss Floyd and nothing more. The consciousness that you are really my wife is an inexpressible comfort to me. Knowing that you are bound to me by ties that Lord Waldemar cannot break, I am willing to allow you the largest liberty."

"Everything now depends upon Hilda," said Grimrod. "She must win Lord Waldemar's affection. It cannot be too late. The feat cannot be impossible. Be careful not to betray your secret until the proper moment. This very evening Hilda must practice her arts of fascination upon her grandfather."

They ate their dinner at the appointed hour, and at half past five, or a little later, took the train back to town. They all returned to the house in Park Lane in the Waldemar carriage, which was in waiting.

"You must make your appeal to his lordship this very evening," said Moer, assisting Hilda from the carriage. "Remember, as Grimrod says, our fortunes now hang upon you."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

WANTED, A SPINNING-WHEEL.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"I declare, it's too bad!" said Blanche Blessington, clasping her pink little hands together in a sort of picturesque desperation. "To have all our lovely tableaux spoiled, just because we can't get a spinning-wheel!"

"But there must be a spinning-wheel to be gotten hold of somewhere in the neighborhood," said Kate Smyth.

"Old Aunt Sarepta Bowling has got one," said Blanche. "A real love of an old-fashioned thing, over a hundred years old."

"But she's as cross as a crab," dolefully added Miss Norton. "And it's as much as one's life is worth to cross her threshold."

"A perfect old Fury," said Blanche. "Oh, Mr. Piper, look here! You've always wanted a quest, or a mission, or something of that sort; now here's one ready to your hand."

"Of course," said Mr. Piper, brushing an atom of dust from his dove-tinted trowsers. "But what is it?"

"Get the spinning-wheel from old Mrs. Bowling."

"Is that all?" said the knightly Gustavus, scornfully. "Why, any one could do that."

And he put on his dainty pearl-colored hat, and sallied forth on the mission to which he had been assigned by his fair feminine friends.

Aunt Sarepta Bowling lived in an ancient farm-house, and when Mr. Piper knocked at the open door he could plainly see her on her knees scrubbing her kitchen floor.

"Who's there?" demanded Aunt Sarepta.

"Pray, ma'am, allow me one word," said Mr. Piper, taking off his hat with a Fifth Avenue flourish. "We are to have *tableaux vivants* at the hotel to-morrow evening, and it would be a great favor if you would lend us your old spinning-wheel, to—"

"I won't lend you nothin'!" shrieked Aunt Sarepta. "Get along, I say! Quick!"

And Mr. Piper was forced to beat an ignominious retreat before the threatening drops of Aunt Sarepta Bowling's scrubbing brush.

"But I won't be thwarted this way," said he. "I'll get into that garret yet, and possess myself of the old rattle-trap."

Thus meditating, Mr. Piper went his way.

The kitchen clock in the old farm-house had just struck twelve as Mr. Gustavus Piper climbed the old pear-tree at the north side of the mansion, and vaulted in at the window.

"Here you are," said Mr. Piper, rubbing his hands. "And now for the spinning-wheel."

And even as he spoke, Mr. Piper tumbled over a red wooden chest, and occasioned a deafening clatter, whereat Aunt Sarepta, starting from her slumbers, ejaculated:

"Who's there?"

A death-like silence ensued.

"It's burglars!" exclaimed the old lady. "An't it a blessin' John and Jim Noakes are sleepin' here to get a good early start with the load of apples to-morrow mornin'? *I'll* fix the fellers; see if I don't!"

And within three minutes two sturdy young giants, were clattering up the garret stairs, one armed with a rusty rifle, the other with an oaken cudgel, while Aunt Sarepta followed, with a guttering tallow candle in her hand.

Mr. Piper, beholding this advancing procession, made instinctively for the garret window, but John Noakes intercepted him with the barrel of the Revolutionary rifle.

"No you don't!" said that hero valiantly. "Come now! What are you here arter?"

"I assure you, my good friends," quoth Piper, "it is only a mistake. I was looking for Mrs. Bowling's spinning-wheel, for a *tableau* down at the hotel."

"Well, I declare," cried Aunt Sarepta. "I ha'n't got no spinnin'-wheel."

"No spinning-wheel!" echoed our discomfited hero.

"La, no!" said Aunt Sarepta. "Mine fell to pieces a year ago last month, and the hired man I kept then chopped it up for kindlin' wood. Come, clear out!"

Thus ended Mr. Gustavus Piper's knightly quest.

He made his appearance at the hotel breakfast table, pale and jaded, just in time to interrupt a delicious little tête-à-tête between Frank Upton and Miss Blanche Blessington.

"Dear me!" said the young lady, "where *have* you been all this time? Oh," with an evident effort of memory, "I *do* recollect now. You went to find a spinning-wheel. Where is it?"

"Bother the spinning-wheel," glumly answered Gustavus, piqued at perceiving how slight an impression his absence had made upon the lovely Blanche's mind.

"You needn't be so rude about it," said Blanche, pouting, "because it don't signify one way or the other about the old spinning-wheel. Frank don't like me to act in tableaux;" and she rolled her blue velvet eyes toward Mr. Upton.

"You see, Piper," said that gentleman in an explanatory whisper, "we're engaged."

And so the *tableaux* came off without the appearance either of Mr. Piper, Miss Blessington, or Aunt Sarepta's spinning-wheel.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1872.

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ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Alarming Prevalence of Crime—The Want of Detective Talent.

We have ceased, in this country, to be shocked by crime, unless it be attended by extraordinary peculiarities, and even then it soon passes out of the common mind. The very frequency of crime seems to make it less abhorred than formerly.

In old times the community was not satisfied, and would not rest easy, after the commission of a crime, until its perpetrator was detected and secured. The whole public seemed to resolve itself into a sort of detective association, bent upon bringing the guilty to justice.

Now people have something else to do. So, indeed, they had in former days; but now they have so much else to do, and so little interest, apparently, to interfere with the commission of crime, that they turn over the matter of tracing out its authors wholly to the Detective Police.

And who and what are the Detective Police?

They seem to be such, generally speaking, only in name. Undoubtedly some of them are robbers, burglars, and thieves themselves; and altogether, when not criminals, they seem to be a very stupid set.

Otherwise, why do so many bold and daring crimes, committed in public streets—in the very heart of our city—or, where they ought to be still more easy of unravelling, in country villages—why, we ask, do such offences remain cloaked in unpenetrated mystery?

There used to be great detective officers. "Old HAYS," as he was familiarly known, in this city, while he lived and flourished, made both property and life more secure here.

We do not seem to have any such men nowadays. To some extent the talent to track criminals is a natural gift, like the instinct by which one dog is enabled to scent game better than another. And it is men possessing the qualification by nature, improved by art and cultivation, who should be selected, as far as practicable, for Police-officers.

The same vicious mode of appointing to the Police as to other departments, mainly in consideration of partisan services, tends inevitably greatly to impair the force.

Speaking of the callousness of public sentiment to crime, is there one in five hundred of our citizens who, if asked, would be found to remember that, only a few weeks ago, a respectable country gentleman was brutally murdered, in the early edge of the evening, in a public walk of our Central Park—the motive to the crime being a sum of money which he had been seen to take out and replace in his pocket, in the afternoon, and of which he was robbed by his murderers?

The unfortunate victim, although his skull was fractured, lingered several days in a state of consciousness before his death, and was able to give a clear, intelligible account of the transaction, and a description of the robber-assassins, although they were somewhat disguised. And yet these criminals are at large, and likely to remain undiscovered.

Where have our detectives been all this intervening time? Was it not possible to find out, by persevering inquiry and unrelenting pursuit, who the persons present when the stranger imprudently exposed his money were?

It seems to us that men of real skill and ability as detectives could have ascertained all this and much more, and in all probability have hit upon some circumstance or other which would have given them a clue to the murderers.

Probably, if there were a stronger public sentiment on the subject, which would more earnestly demand the arrest of the guilty, there would, in time, appear, in response to it, a greater amount of the talent required on the Police force. As it is now, crime, if slightly concealed, appears to be committed with impunity, and the chances of detection are slight.

Electricity and Love.

A lover in Arkansas, failing to make a favorable impression on the heart of the girl whom he loved, went to a fortune-teller for advice. The fortune-teller advised him to try electricity on the obdurate fair one. Thereupon the lover procured an electrical battery, and after a deal of manœuvring succeeded in connecting it with a seat which the young lady was occupying. At a favorable moment he turned on the electricity, and the young lady sprang toward the ceiling. But she came down again, and, with the lightning flashing from her eyes, caught him by the collar, opened the door, and directed his attention to the sidewalk. This we consider one of woman's rights.

◆

—One of our correspondents, who reads the reports of all the banquets, complains that so much is said about "the memory of WASHINGTON," and inquires whether WASHINGTON had a better memory than anybody else, that it should be so generally remarked upon.

Trusting Out—Property and Lives.

People are very careful how they trust out their property. Bankers adopt all sorts of precautions to make their loans secure. Traders maintain, at large expense, what are called Mercantile Agencies, with ramifications extending all over the country, keeping a thousand ears constantly listening for every word of gossip prejudicial to the standing of any one who has occasion to buy on credit, and swift pens, or the swifter telegraph, ready to communicate it to head-quarters, where it is held at the service of all the subscribers, who, by paying so much a year, entitle themselves to such secret information.

Thus particular are people with their money and goods. How is it about trusting their lives to the care of others, and to chance?

A few days ago a large number of persons were riding, in a train of cars, toward Seabrook, N. H. They were rushing on, at about the rate of a mile in three minutes, toward a misplaced switch. The lives of several, and the safety of all, depended upon that switch being set right before they reached the station; and that depended upon the thoughtfulness, the memory, the care of an ordinary laboring man, employed at small pay, and possessing only the qualities which such pay can command. If this one man should not happen to think to restore the switch to the right position before this train arrived, the collision was inevitable, and morally certain to be attended with the loss of lives and of limbs, and terrible bruises and injuries. Yet the passengers were content, confiding and happy. Some chatted; some read; some slept.

The train was coming; it was near at hand. On it thundered, with its tremendous weight and momentum. Alas! the confidence in the switchman turned out to have been misplaced! The switch was left turned wrong, on to the turn-out or side track, where a freight train was standing, into which—as the phrase introduced from the frequency of the occurrence is—the passenger train was "telescoped."

Oh, the suffering, the crushing, the mangling that followed! It was not the loss of a hundred dollar loan; it was the loss of human limbs and human lives. They had been trusted to the remembrance and care of an individual to whom very likely not a bank in New Hampshire would have loaned a hundred dollars, and the risk had proved a bad one.

And yet to just such risks as this all travellers by rail expose themselves. These risks—precisely such dangers—exist, a few miles apart, all along the lines.

Is there no remedy for it? Must people expose their lives to chances which they would not take on a small sum of money?

We apprehend that the risk could be avoided, and that it is chargeable to the parsimoniousness of the railway companies. This has been made manifest in England, by a report, upon a recent collision, by Capt. TYLER, a distinguished engineer. The substance of Capt. TYLER's report is thus succinctly stated in the *London Times:*

> "Captain TYLER points out, in language which is very forcible, but in no respect too strong for the occasion, that station-masters, signalmen and porters must be expected to make mistakes, and that it is the duty of companies to avail themselves of the simple means by which such mistakes may be rendered impossible. He says that in 1871, 53 accidents out of 159, and in 1870, 60 out of 122, were caused by the want of locking, or by other defective signal arrangements; and he comments with great severity upon the unwillingness of the more wealthy and powerful companies to adopt improvements, even when they have been fully tested in practice, and are well known to afford greatly increased security to traffic."

We are glad to see that the stock of the company on whose road the accident occurred of which we have been speaking, immediately fell four or five per cent. We wish it had gone down twenty-five. Three of the passengers died the same day—one was instantly killed—and we do not know how many have died since, and how many may yet die, and how many are crippled for life.

We should rejoice to see the company obliged to pay one hundred thousand dollars for every life it has taken, and ten thousand for every limb it has broken. More than that, the President, Directors and Superintendent ought to be convicted of manslaughter, and sent to the State prison.

Let us go to work and make railroad travelling safer.

Suffocating Judges and Freezing Jurors—A Discourteous Judge.

A few weeks ago, a distinguished English judge committed suicide, in a fit of delirium brought on by the bad ventilation of the rooms in which he was compelled to hold court.

Our New York court rooms are but little better, and those in charge of them do not take the trouble to keep them as comfortable as their construction will permit. An interesting incident recently occurred in the Superior Court of this city, Chief-justice BARBOUR presiding. Late in the afternoon, a case which had been on trial all day was submitted to the jury, with instructions to bring in a sealed verdict.

> "Can't you give us a warmer room?" one of the jurors asked the Judge, or rather undertook to ask him.
>
> "I don't want you to say anything to me," answered the Judge sharply.
>
> "We were compelled," continued the juror, "to agree upon an early verdict in the last case on account of the cold."
>
> "Not a word to me," insisted the Judge.
>
> "But we don't want to freeze to death," pleaded the juror.
>
> "Clerk, leave the room," said the Judge to the Clerk, "and leave the jury here."
>
> The jury had to remain.

This shows that the deficient ventilation had already so affected Chief-justice BARBOUR, that he had lost all sense of judicial courtesy and propriety.

◆

The following is an article from the pen of FANNY FERN, written when she was so ill that she could not use her right hand, and consequently had to write it with her left hand:

The Sins of Christians.

Most people suppose that as soon as a person joins the church, *perfection* in thought, word and deed is to be demanded of him. They forget that, like other soldiers who have enlisted, the most loyal and true-hearted have moments when the weary body succumbs to torpor; or the strained vision, through the dust and smoke of battle, loses sight of the height to be attained; or the benumbed ear listens feebly for the rallying cry. Who shall call such a one—"traitor?" Not He who "knoweth our frame," and "remembereth that we are dust." Others besides Peter have gone out "and wept bitterly;" and though a censorious world may have condemned the offence and sneered at the tears, yet over and above the transgression and the penitence the Saviour has written, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." FANNY FERN.

MAKING EACH OTHER MISERABLE.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

As if there were not troubles enough in this world that come upon men without human design, people set themselves to work to diminish happiness and to increase misery. Phrenologists tell us that there is in man an organ and faculty of *destructiveness*—that, when unregulated, it inspires cruelty; that it is the root of that horrible pleasure which the old Romans had, and their modern descendants still have, in murderous gladiatorial shows, contests of wild beasts, bull-fights, etc.

But there runs through modern civilized society a vein of the same quality. People that would faint to see a gush of blood, and who think themselves Christians, have a lively enjoyment in witnessing pain, and cultivate the art of inflicting it. The mention of a few of the methods employed will make good my remarks:

The delight with which many report bad news; the eagerness with which they report to people evil sayings which cannot but lacerate the feelings, show a morbid love of suffering. This is not the trait of villainous natures. It exists in people of real kindness of disposition. It is not anomalous, because it is so widely extended as to seem normal.

Some people scatter pain-producing elements thoughtlessly, and are surprised and sorry when they witness the suffering produced. Others do it for momentary pleasure, without meaning any serious results. But now and then we find persons who love to torment a victim. They enjoy another's sufferings. It is their happiness to see some one made keenly miserable by their lance-like tongue. They will smile, and talk in low, sweet tones, and shoot out quivering sentences, poison-tipped, and cast a look sideways to see if they strike, and at every sign of pain their face grows bright.

In part this is a latent ambition. People thus assert their power over others. It raises one in his own estimation to perceive that he can control the moods of another.

But there is a still more common exhibition of the love of suffering. It is seen in the ignoble, but universal *Art of Teasing.*

We see it in its most unregulated form among children, who nip and pinch each other, make up mouths, twitch each other's clothes, run off with toys, push and "joggle," point with insulting fingers, and in a hundred ingenious ways strive to make each other miserable. As they grow up, it often happens that young people carry on a campaign of teasing, each one vieing with another which shall be the sharpest.

It does not cease with youth. Grown folks, good-natured, kind-hearted, well-meaning, and full of benevolence, often show this perverse spirit in the midst of all their kindness. By sharp speech, by vailed sarcasm, by exciting curiosity which they will not gratify, by narrating pretended facts, by sinister compliments, by rallying one when circumstances forbid a reply, by equivocal praise, by blunt telling of some truth that had been better left unsaid, and by hundreds of ingenious ways which time would fail to tell, people inflict pain upon each other.

Those who in the main are striving to make friends happy, will have one black thread in the web of white. Those who really love each other have a strange fondness for stirring each other up.

There is an innocent and even pleasure-producing method of rallying which, if deftly and gracefully done, heightens the enjoyment of society. One may touch a discord if it lapses into a true chord. Sometimes, when we have good news to tell, we are bewitched with a desire to open the matter as if it were a great trouble that we were about to break. There is a gentle badinage, an innocent arrow-shooting, which flatters and charms. But life is full of the other sort. If Darwin is right in thinking that men ascended from monads by gradual evolution, then it is very certain that some men came up by the way of the musquito, the flea and the biting fly, and that their ancestral traits still linger in the blood.

BEGGARS AND WORKING FOLK.

Although I must plead guilty to scattering small change among professional beggars myself, I cannot help feeling that it is not a wise thing to do. Besides, it is not kind to those who are far more deserving.

To be sure, we are not called upon to refrain from being charitable to those who are unworthy, and I doubt if many beggars are really millionaires; but who can help contrasting the zeal with which certain folks seize upon their bodily infirmities as an excuse for becoming mendicants, while others more terribly afflicted are industrious and respectable citizens.

If one can only do a little to assist the unfortunate, how much better it is to patronize the man with one arm who has stationery to sell, than the man who industriously rings your bell to ask for alms on the same plea. And for the tinker upon crutches one should surely find something to do, if only to encourage him in the manly spirit which makes him hobble about with his little furnace, instead of sitting on a corner waiting for people to open their purses.

Aside from such infirmity as would admit any one to a hospital, it is seldom that a high-spirited man or woman is forced to resort to regular and professional begging. Moments there may be when help must be asked, and life may be a woeful struggle to keep from it, but the struggle will be made; and you can help the honest struggler by buying shabby bits of tape from old women who come to your door, or by putting down your pride sufficiently to buy candy for your children at the queer little stand kept by the twisted little being whose figure would be fine stock in trade for an Italian mendicant. And you, sir, can have your boots blacked very often, and let that ragged little boy "hold your horse," or in winter shovel the snow from your pavement. Indeed, the more people who work for you and whom you pay well, the greater benefactor you are to the city. Honest wages ennoble, but charity degrades.

Of course we must *give* often, but not at the cost of those who want to work and are willing to work faithfully. And despite your soft and sentimental feeling toward the picturesque foreigner in an attitude of despair on the bank steps, with his wife at his knees with an old hat, and his child perpetually dying in his arms, your own washerwoman, the man who trims your grape-vine, the boy who offers to do "any odd job or a narrand," are people much more worthy of gentle looks and their meed of the national currency.

Don't give all your kindness to the beggars, and speak of laboring folk as "horrid creatures who always overcharge." Don't drive them to desperation and barrel organs by making them feel that the laborer is not worthy of his hire. MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Suppression of Gambling in Europe.

It is announced that the famous—or rather infamous—gambling-houses at Baden-Baden are to be closed by the government of the Grand Duchy at the end of the present year. In common with the whole Christian world, we rejoice at this evidence of real progress and true reform in Germany.

Not Afraid of Small-Pox.

The Editor of the *Passaic Herald* makes the following announcement:

> "We have heard of small-pox being communicated by handling greenbacks. The editor of this paper has been vaccinated, and none of our friends need apprehend any fatal results to us from handling greenbacks. Therefore they may safely send their subscriptions right along."

EARTH'S ANGELS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I never saw an angel,
Except the ones in books;
I don't believe a mortal
Knows how an angel looks.
We guess at something misty,
With trailing wings of white,
With amber tresses floating,
And garments strangely bright.

But I believe earth's angels
Walk here in mortal guise,
Though we discern but faintly
Through heavy-lidded eyes,
Or see them as they leave us,
Who walked beside us here,
Their angelhood quite hidden
Because it lived so near.

I can remember angels
Who seemed like common folks,
Who wore old-fashioned bonnets,
And faded winter cloaks;
Who came when dire disaster
Crowned lesser home mishap,
Or younger claimants crowded
The dear maternal lap,

With curving arms wide open
To take the weary in,
With patient love to listen
To childish want or sin.
What better thing could angels
For childish sinners do,
Than listen to their story,
And bid them promise new!

I think of fireside angels
Upon whose faded hair
There shone no crown of glory,
And yet the crown was there;
When tender love, true-hearted,
Forgave the wrongs it knew,
And patient voice gave answer
The days of trial through.

Ah, me! the childish angel
Who beckons as I write!
Perchance I should not know him
In mystic robe of white.
He wears a school-boy's jacket,
And cap, and boots, to me,
As when we talked at twilight,
His head against my knee.

There are dear mother angels—
We each perchance know one—
Whose robes of better glory
Are daily being spun.
With loving hands to guide us,
With loving speech to cheer,
Said I not well, earth angels
Walk daily with us here!

SQUIRE SAM'S DEFEAT.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

Sam Wiles was a noted character in his native town of Jinglejigge. He was what might be called a versatile man. The agility with which he skipped from one side to the other of the political fence, always coming down on the winning side, was a wonder to those of less suppleness of principle.

He had been through the gamut of petty offices, from that of fence-viewer to the more responsible one of Justice of the Peace, in which last he had hoped to die—when his time came. He liked the place. It satisfied his ambition, and withal gratified a natural taste he had for meddling in the disputes of his neighbors. He had been elected to the office thrice, in succession, each time riding in on the tide of some new party organized to reform the abuses of that to which he had last belonged.

How his star, in which he had come to have a sort of Napoleonic faith, waned at last, we propose to tell.

The Jinglejiggers became awakened on the Temperance Question, and got up a party on it. A new election was at hand, and it behoved "Squire Sam"—that was his popular title—to choose sides. Nor was the choice an easy one. He had been weaned on tansy bitters, and throughout his thirty years of manhood had never missed his morning cocktail—frequently indulging in repetitions of the same to an extent hardly justified by the most liberal construction of the Apostolic license granted for stomachic reasons.

The thought of cold water "straight," for a permanent beverage, fairly made him shiver. But, with a mental reservation of the right, on occasion, to put in "a little something to kill the *waggletails,*" he took the pledge, and the places of bibulous resort which had been wont to know him, knew him no more.

True, his nose continued as red and his face as pimply as ever; but Squire Sam laid it to the *musquitos,* and the landlord with whom he boarded confirmed the statement, for the musquitos, he said, after a night at the Squire, always had a boozy look in the morning, and were apt to be found buzzing thirstily about the water pitcher. But the landlord was a little miffed at Sam for "throwing a stone at his bar," as he called it—in other words, for withdrawing his hitherto valuable custom—and probably a little exaggerated the facts.

Squire Sam entered the contest with the energy of an old campaigner. The first thing to be done was to get the nomination of the new party. Several competitors were striving for the same end, each struggling to outdo the others in zeal for the cause. The Squire talked like a tract. His previous record was a little against him, but wisely he was the first to condemn his own errors, treating them with a severity which left nothing to be said by others. The result was, that like many another eleventh-hour convert, the Squire soon bade fair to outstrip in public confidence those who had borne the heat and burden of the day.

His professed scruples verged on the fanatical. He abjured mince-pies, railed at black-strap, and reviled cider. He even expressed a doubt as to the propriety of sending for a case of Congress water, which he had been advised to use as a constitutional corrective. It was not till he had taken the advice of Deacon Crane on the point, who gave it as his opinion that the liquid possessed no intoxicating properties, that he ventured to give the order.

The night before the nomination, Squire Sam and his friends were holding a close caucus in Deacon Crane's parlor. One after another candidate had withdrawn, till the contest lay at last between the Squire and Consider Smith—the former being supposed to have the inside track. But Consider was a wily chap, and the little knot of caucusers were anxiously debating the best means to use with this and that doubtful man, when they were disturbed by a loud knocking.

Going to the door, the Deacon found himself confronted by Consider Smith.

"Squire Wiles, I learn, is here," said Consider, "and I must see him immediately."

And without waiting for an invitation to enter, which the Deacon hesitated to give, he strode into the midst of the assembly.

"There's a great row going on in your office, Squire," he said, with a quizzical glance at the company. "I heard it in passing, and thought it my duty to tell you."

"A row in my office!" exclaimed the Squire; "what on earth can that mean? No one has any business there at this hour. I must go down at once."

"And the rest of us had better accompany you," Consider suggested. "It mightn't be safe going alone."

The advice was acted on.

As they approached the office, the most unearthly sounds proceeded from it. Frightful whoops and yells, intermingled with the crashing of glass, made up an infernal medley of noises which would have broken the peace of Bedlam.

"What *can* it mean?" said the Squire. "I wonder if Tom"—Tom was the Squire's *factotum*—"locked up all right this evening."

"Let me see," Consider pondered—"it was about five o'clock, I think, that I saw Tom on the sidewalk with a box marked 'Congress Water,' which had come by express. I helped him carry it in, and as we put it down, my end slipped and fell with a jolt that knocked the lid off. Being pressed for time, I left Tom to look after the damage, and hurried on about my business."

"I—I think," stammered the Squire, "I had better go in alone."

"By no means," protested the Deacon.

"It would be inexcusable rashness," added Consider, intrepidly shoving ahead and pushing open the door.

It was a queer scene the party entered on. The floor was covered with fragments of broken glass, and old Tom, heretofore the picture of sobriety, perched in the Squire's chair, with a well-filled tumbler in his hand, and a half-emptied bottle before him, had reached that condition in which the earth's diurnal revolution becomes visible, and, with his feet against the edge of the table, was evidently bracing himself against the danger of rolling off.

"Th-th-three cheers 'n (*hic*) a tiger for the temp'r'ns candidate!" shouted Tom, and he gave them with a will.

Then giving the table a kick, the bottle lost its balance and came down with a crash.

"L-l-l-(*hic*) let 'r rip!" hiccupped Tom; "there's plen'y more 'n th' box."

"How came you in such a state?" thundered the Squire.

"I (*hic*) aintinostate," said Tom doggedly, "on'y when that awk'ard l-lummix, Consid'r Smith, let fall his cenderthe (*hic*) b-box 'n busted one o' your b-b-bottles o' Congers wat'r, 't sm-sm-(*hic*) smelt s' good I thought I'd (*hic*) try a leetl'."

"Bourbon! as I'm a Good Templar!" exclaimed the Deacon, with a sniff.

"Old Rye, if I've a nose!" asseverated Consider Smith.

"Y-y-you 're right! Mis'r Smith," said Tom, with a wink, "'n a jam up articl'—(*hic*) hev some?"

The Squire's friends turned away in horror. In vain he protested it was a "put up job." In vain he published a card next morning, beseeching the public to do what it never does—suspend its judgment. Squire Sam lost the nomination, and, of course, his office. Nor is he likely again to leave the shades of private life, for the laugh is on him—the hardest thing in the world to live down. He puts in a *good deal* of "something to kill the waggletails" now.

AMBITION.

Never expect a selfishly ambitious man to be a true friend. The man who makes ambition his god, tramples on everything else. He will climb upward, though he treads on the hearts of those who love him best, and in his eyes your only value lies in the use you may be to him. Personally, one is nothing to him; and if you are not rich, or famous, or powerful enough to advance his interests after he has got above you, he cares no more for you. Why should he? To some men,

> "'Tis sweet to know there is an eye to mark
> Your coming, and grow brighter when you come,"

but not to him. The "eye" cannot put dollars into his pocket, nor a notice of him in the newspaper, or elect him to a fine position of any kind.

Once, perhaps, in by-gone days, when he was a less successful man, even *your* friendship was of some value; but he has risen above you now, and has no need of your favor or your introduction. His compliments, once so freely dispensed, would be wasted on one of no importance; and by way of relief to the flatteries he still utters where it will pay to utter them, he snubs or is sharp with you.

Very well; don't breathe a sigh for him, and save your tears for more worthy folk, if you belong to the weeping sex.

True Greatness never yet forgot the friend of its hour of struggle, but cold Ambition has neither friendship nor love. In very earnest you gave him hand and heart in those dead days. In true hospitality you welcomed him to your hearth and your board; but the bread and radishes of friendship are only bread and radishes to him. Why should he sup with you when Position offers him cards for a reception?

You thought fine things of him, and you loved him well. No matter for that. You have played your part—he his. Leave Ephraim to his idols. M. K. D.

What are We Coming to!

In a neighboring city, the Chief of Police and one of his detectives have been indicted for complicity in the robbery of a bank. The charges against them are explicit. It is alleged that they furnished the necessary information to professional burglars, and, in fact, "put up the job." It was estimated that the amount of the plunder would be three millions of dollars, and the Chief of Police was to have six hundred thousand dollars as his share of the "divide." What are we coming to!

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NOTHING LIKE MODESTY.—A young man in Indiana, in announcing that he has become the proprietor of a small paper published there, describes himself as "a young printer of large experience and fine tastes."

◆

DEADLY WEAPONS.—The *Chicago Post* entitles an account of the sentence of two murderers thus: "The Danger attending the use of *Whiskey* and *Other Deadly Weapons.*

◆

HOEING A MAN TO DEATH.—The Havana correspondent of the New York *Herald* says:

> "Twenty-five Chinese, belonging to the estate Manuela, near Sagua, barbarously hacked the administrator, Don Facundo Garcia, to death with their rude hoes. Garcia defended himself, killing one and wounding three of his aggressors, but was obliged to succumb.

Perilous Adventure at Sea—The Cook Overboard and the Captain Rescuing Him.

[From the Calais (Maine) Times.]

On the last voyage of the schooner *Eugene* from St. Stephen, N. B., to Hyannis, Mass., with a cargo of railroad sleepers, she encountered a severe gale, and the captain found it necessary to heave the vessel to. While in this position a sea boarded the vessel, carrying overboard a part of the deck load, which carried with it the cook. The rest of the crew did not observe the accident, and were not aware of his condition until they heard him astern of the vessel. The mate being disabled, the captain and the two men left on board lowered the boat with much difficulty, when the captain, taking one of the men with him, left the schooner in search of the cook, whom they found in about thirty minutes clinging to a sleeper.

During this time the schooner was drifting fast to leeward, and when they got the man in the boat only the masts of the schooner could be seen from the boat; but by perseverance and good management, in two hours the captain got his boat along side the schooner. The sea continued so rough they found it impossible to hoist the boat, as she kept filling as fast as they could bail. They therefore had to secure her astern and tow her full of water. The cook, on recovering the next morning, found that while in the water he had lost his wallet containing between one and two hundred dollars, his summer's earnings. The next day, the weather having moderated, they hauled the boat along side and bailed her out, and in the bottom of the boat they found the wallet containing the money lost by the cook.

New Work for Farmers—Cleaning the City Streets.

[From the New York Times.]

Certain Long Island farmers have undertaken to keep clean the gutters in parts of Brooklyn for the sake of the fertilizing material thus collected, and they perform this work without charge to the city. In these days, when farmers are paying high prices for poor fertilizers, it is a monstrous waste of wealth to throw the sweepings of city streets into the river. The farmers who first join together to obtain the privilege of cleaning the streets of New York will find a fortune in their hands. Indeed, were public sentiment more enlightened upon this subject, it would be easy for the city to derive a large revenue from the sale of the street sweepings, instead of paying, as it now does, enormous sums to men who, for the most part, fail to keep the streets decently clean.

JUST ONE THOUGHT OF MOTHER.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

What though we cannot remember
  Infancy at play or rest,
Yet we know we once were edened
  On a proud, glad mother's breast,
With her fond arms round us folding;
  With devotion in her eyes;
For the little gift her whole heart
  Throbbing thanks unto the skies.

O that mother-infant vision!
  O'er health's roses what her joy!
What a fear at their least fading!
  How she clasped the girl or boy!
Well or ailing, for their future,
  As she laughed or trembled there,
All her being, with the father's,
  Was in its dear self a prayer.

Men and women, is this vision
  Not sure proof in every part
To us, of the endless value
  Of the human mind and heart?
Such care ever must be hallow'd,
  While it is upon our sod,
'Mid Evangels that show tender'st
  Touching of the hand of God?

In our life's unceasing battle,
  May not thoughts of it restore
Courage, if we ever falter,
  Making us strong as before?
And what shield against temptation
  Can be surer here than this:
Just one thought of how that mother
  Gave full many an angel kiss?

Then in that divine, sweet vision,
  As in a seraphic spell,
Let all human hearts for ever
  With Religion's signet swell—
Signet planted for the Eternal
  On the fountain-head of Time,
While the Mother, Babe and manger
  Heavens in Judea's clime.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MISS PEDDER AT DESOLATION.

In her state-room aboard of the *Flying Childers* sat Miss Ruth Pedder, so changed from her usual self that her best friends would have naturally failed to recognize her. Her eyes were sunken, her cheeks hollow and pallid, and her whole frame emaciated, like that of a victim of a deadly consumption. Upon leaving New York she had been promptly assailed by seasickness, and a week thereafter by a dangerous fever, which had run its full course, and had subsequently suffered another long spell of seasickness, aggravated by rough weather. Her entire voyage from New York to Desolation had thus been a constant succession of miseries.

At the moment at which we again take up the thread of her history, she had just crawled out of her berth and seated herself upon her trunk, and was endeavoring to catch a glimpse of land through the small port-hole by which her state-room was lighted. Her hair was hanging in a tangled mass down her back, and she was clad in an old gown which clung in matted creases to her shrunken figure, so that her appearance would have been sufficiently uninviting, even if her countenance had not worn a look of disgust and ill-humor that rendered it positively repulsive.

The breeze entering at the port-hole seemed to revive her, and she drew it in with long respirations, paying no heed, in her feverish longing and impatience, to the polar chill with which it was accompanied.

"Enough—oh, enough of this misery!" came from her bleached lips. "I could not endure it a week longer—no, nor a day! I must have rest—a change—anything to break the horrible monotony of this long agony. Captain Hooper thinks we shall reach Desolation this morning. I hope and pray that we may do so."

A step at the entrance of the state-room was followed by a knock, and a woman opened the door and entered, closing the door carefully behind her.

This woman was Mrs. Gawler, who, with her husband, had been chosen by Capt. Pedder to accompany his sister in the avowed capacity of "keepers," but in reality as attendants and assistants.

Mrs. Gawler was large and bony, and was even coarser of mind than of person, being ignorant and wicked, and having few of the charms and none of the graces by which her sex is usually distinguished.

"So, here you are finally," said Miss Pedder impatiently. "You have been gone long enough to bring me good news."

"I stayed to speak with Captain Hooper," explained Mrs. Gawler, as she dumped herself familiarly upon two-thirds of the sofa occupied by her mistress. "Not seeing him, I took a good look at things for myself."

"Well, Hetsey?"

"Mr. Kingston says he expects to see the island of Desolation just as soon as the fogs lift a little ahead of us."

"We are near the island then?"

"Within ten miles of it, Mr. Kingston is almost certain."

"Almost? And why not quite sure of where he is, and all about it?"

"Because he didn't get an observation yesterday, nor the day before, and knows his whereabouts only by log and by compass."

"Well, it's something that we are within ten miles of the island," commented Miss Pedder, with a long-drawn sigh of relief. "We shall doubtless arrive in the course of the day. I don't feel able to dress, but I must, I suppose. It wouldn't do for Hawley to see me in these tatters. Get me a glass of brandy—no, make me a strong and hot brandy sling. I've just realized that we are in a cold climate."

The sling was brought and swallowed, and Miss Pedder declared herself a little stronger, and more comfortable, as she proceeded, with the aid of Mrs. Gawler, to make her toilet.

"How fearfully I am changed!" she could not help murmuring, upon looking at her reflection in a mirror. "Frightful! Don't you think so?"

"You are certainly thinner and paler. But nearly all ladies are so after a long sea voyage. You'll soon pick up again."

"I'm not fit to be seen! Mr. Hawley will certainly be disgusted."

Mrs. Gawler pursed up her thin lips, and smiled half sneeringly and half pityingly.

"It's by no means certain that Mr. Hawley will see you at present," she said. "A year has passed since your brother left him here, and in this time what may not have happened!"

The suggestion was sufficiently disheartening. Miss Pedder sank back upon the sofa helplessly.

"Oh, I shall die if I have had all this trouble for nothing!" she sighed. "I suppose everybody aboard of the ship continues to regard me as an insane woman?"

"Yes—everybody except me and Gawler."

"Captain Hooper has no suspicion of the truth?"

"No. Why should he have? He has seen nothing of you since we left New York. He believes all your brother told him, and considers you as crazy as Bedlam."

"That's as it should be, Hetsey. I wish this insane dodge to be kept up until Mr. Hawley is found. In fact, I do not wish you to ever, ever reveal my secret. No one must ever know that I've been playing a game."

"Well, no one ever will know it—so long as you pay me and my husband handsomely for our silence. This p'int is already settled between me and Cupp. Just so long as you do by Cupp and me as you've been doing, just so long shall we keep the secret."

"And no longer—you may as well add," said Miss Pedder bitterly.

Mrs. Gawler laughed coarsely.

"You've hit the nail on the head," she assented, with the frankness of unblushing depravity. "And why shouldn't you pay us well for what we are doing for you? Your brother has given you ten thousand dollars for the expenses of the voyage—"

"No, not so much."

"Excuse me—I know just what I'm talking about, Miss Pedder. Your brother has given you ten thousand dollars, mostly in bills of exchange, and you can realize this amount any day after your arrival in Melbourne. And as so much is depending upon Cupp and me, and as we propose to keep your secret, not only now but after your marriage to Hawley—if you do marry him—why, Cupp and me are sure that you will deal like a queen with us, and make it pleasant for us to remain always near you in Australy. You could hardly expect Cupp, you know, to go back to clerking in a pawn-shop, after what he has done for you."

Miss Pedder arose, with a gesture of anger and a look of disgust, but a low knock upon the door diverted her thoughts.

"Come in," she called.

Cupp Gawler noiselessly entered.

He was well worthy of his partner in business and wedlock, being the incarnation of a low, coarse ruffian. He was short of stature and broad-shouldered, with a huge head and a burly neck. A profusion of red hair and a bushy red beard added not a little to the coarseness of his appearance, whose sinister type had not one redeeming quality or expression.

He was smiling now and rubbing his hands together, with a quick succession of grim chuckles.

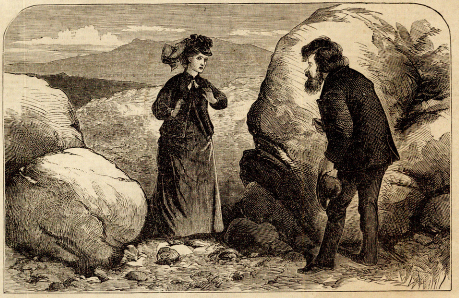
"Hetsey has expressed our views exactly, my dear young lady—as I overheard while doubling up my fist for a knock upon the door," said he to Miss Pedder, with a manner quite as offensive as that of his wife had been. "We know the value of our services, and shall take care to be well paid for them."

Miss Pedder frowned ominously.

"But it isn't of that little matter that I'm here to speak," resumed Gawler. "I came to say that we are close to our island."

"Are you sure?" cried Miss Pedder, with a flush of pleasant excitement.

"Perfectly sure, my dear young lady. I've seen it myself. The fog has just lifted, and we find ourselves off Cape Français, and within three miles of our destination. In a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes the ship will be at anchor at the head of the bay, and now for our programme of action."



MISS RUTH PEDDER ENCOUNTERED BY FISTY BANTAM.

Miss Pedder reflected a moment.

"Go on deck and wait until the ship is anchored," she then commanded.

"Very well, Miss Pedder."

"And—and make sure if Hawley or any one else is seen on the island."

Gawler bowed assent and hastily withdrew.

"Make me another sling," then said Miss Pedder to her attendant. "I'm all in a flutter."

The sling was brought, but it did not calm her nerves, and she was more excited than ever when Gawler again appeared in her presence.

"The anchor is down," he announced, "and a boat is being lowered for you to go ashore in. No one has been seen on the island—not the least sign of life has been given us."

Miss Pedder clutched at her wildly throbbing heart, and her white face became a shade paler.

"That is strange," she commented. "If Hawley were here, he would show himself."

"So Captain Hooper was just saying."

"It must be that he has been rescued—"

"Or that he is dead!"

A moment of painful silence followed.

"Well, well, I'll go ashore—and see if I can get any trace of him," then faltered the anxious woman. "Stick close to me, both of you. Let me have that thickest vail, Hetsey. I can hardly move, Gawler. I never felt so weak before in all my life. You'll have to steady me—one on one side and the other on the other. Let's hurry. I'm anxious to get out of every one's sight and hearing."

She took her way to the deck, supported by her attendants as she had suggested, and it was no vain pretence that she stood in need of their services, for she was deathly faint with anxiety and excitement. At sight of her bowed and trembling figure, and especially at sight of her wild eyes and pallid features, as seen through her vail, a murmur of pity arose on every side of her, and many expressions of sympathy fell upon her hearing, as she crossed the deck, and was assisted to descend to the boat which was in waiting to convey her to the shore.

"Do not be gone long," was the whispered injunction of Captain Hooper to Gawler. "The wind is too fair for us to be lingering here. Besides, if she is not cured of her insanity in an hour, it is idle to hope that she will be cured of it ever."

And with this he gave a signal to the four stout seamen in charge of the boat, and they at once struck out for the shore.

The quarter of a mile intervening between the ship and the beach was soon traversed, and Miss Pedder hastened to land.

"You can remain here," said Gawler to the seamen. "We'll probably be back within three quarters of an hour."

This point arranged, he and his wife assisted Miss Pedder up the adjacent slopes, directing their course toward Table Rock, of whose situation they had previously informed themselves.

Ere long the trio were out of sight and hearing from the seamen, and even from the ship, the crest of a ridge intervening. And here Miss Pedder suddenly halted and drew her figure erect, withdrawing her arms from the arms of her assistants.

"I see that my voyage here is to result in a disappointment," she avowed.

"Your opinion agrees with ours perfectly, my dear young lady," replied Gawler.

"I may as well come to my senses now as at any other time."

"Agreed, again."

"Sit down and rest a moment. I'll walk on by myself a short distance further. I wish to think as to my future action."

Gawler at once complied with the suggestion by seating himself on the nearest rock, and Mrs. Gawler did likewise, while Miss Pedder called all her energy to her aid and pushed on in the direction of Table Rock, soon vanishing from their view.

"I've had my labor for my pains," she could not help saying aloud in her bitterness, as she found herself alone. "Hawley is certainly gone!"

Going on quite a distance, she seated herself upon a large stone, and mused a few minutes upon the various problems of her surroundings.

"Well, well," she finally concluded, "it only remains for me to recover my reason, and to resume my horrible voyage. My share of our little plot has utterly miscarried. Hawley is certainly gone!"

She was in the act of arising, when she was startled by a light and hasty footstep near her.

"Oh, my heart!" she cried, again clutching her side, and sinking back upon the stone she had been occupying. "He is here, then! He lives—"

The words suddenly died away upon her lips, and a look of mortal terror appeared upon her countenance.

The figure her eyes had encountered was frightful to look upon—a sort of living skeleton.

It was the figure of an undersized man, who had evidently suffered cold and hunger and sickness, and all the thousand ills of a prolonged residence upon the island.

This strange intruder is known to our readers, as terribly as he was changed. He was no other, in fact, than Fisty Bantam.

"You'll excuse me, Madam," he said, in a low and broken voice, as he sank feebly upon the ground near her. "I heard you utter a name a few minutes ago—the name of Hawley—and I have followed you some distance, and finally ventured to present myself to your notice. Is Mr. Hawley a friend of yours?"

"Yes, yes—a very dear friend," Miss Pedder hastened to reply, her curiosity concerning Hawley instantly commanding all other emotions. "Have you seen him? Do you know where he is? Is he still living?"

"Yes, he's still living, Madam, and I knows where he is," replied Bantam, as a gleam of speculation shot from his dark eyes. "You are his wife, I suppose, or his sister—"

"Not exactly—no, but yet a near and dear friend. But where is Mr. Hawley? and why does he not show himself? Has he gone?"

"One moment, Madam, if you please. Before I answers your questions, I should like to ask you for a trifle of information. Did you come here in the ship that has just entered the harbor?"

"I did."

"What is your business?"

"I came here to look for Mr. Hawley.

"To look for Hawley, eh? And what other business besides looking for Hawley may you have at this island?"

"Not any; no other business whatever. Mr. Hawley was left here through a strange mistake—"

"Yes, I knows all about that. He told me all about it himself. But have you no other reason for coming here than the one you have mentioned—to look for Hawley?"

"No other, I assure you."

"What ship is this?"

"The *Flying Childers*, of New York, an Australian clipper—the very ship of which Mr. Hawley was lately the first officer."

"Ah, I sees! And so you have come here to look for him? That's the long and the short of the whole matter?"

"Yes, sir—that's all we are here for."

"And you knows nothing of the *Thunderer*, nor of any other ship-of-war, nor of the *Dower*, nor of anybody from Australia?"

"No, I know nothing of any dowers, nor of any of these matters," declared Miss Pedder, with a sincerity that proclaimed itself upon her features. "I am here to look for Mr. Hawley, and that is my whole business here, I assure you."

Bantam scanned her face a few moments with an earnestness that was almost savage.

"I believe you," he then said. "And now to answer your questions. Mr. Hawley has left this island, and gone on to Australia—"

"Ah! I feared as much!"

"He left a couple of weeks since, in a whaler that chanced to call here for water," resumed Bantam. "I should have gone with him, only I was sick on the other side of the island, where I had gone to look for a ship that we had seen standing in shorewards in that direction. I was shipwrecked here, you see, a few months ago, and Mr. Hawley and I have been the best of friends ever since. He wouldn't have gone off without me, if he had supposed me to be living, but he probably made up his mind that I was dead, for the reason, you see—"

"And he has really gone?"

"Yes, Madam. He left here two weeks ago in a whaler, and it's hardly necessary to say that I'm as anxious to take my leave of the island as he was. Would your friends be willing to receive a poor shipwrecked sailor? Will you allow me to go off to the ship with you, and will you speak a good word for me?"

"Why, of course," replied Miss Pedder, arising, "and the sooner we go down to the beach the better."

She at once led the way in that direction, and Bantam walked along near her.

"I shall be glad to extend to you any kindness in my power," added Miss Pedder, after a long pause. "You look almost starved."

"I am, Madam."

"You can doubtless tell me many things about Mr Hawley—how he lived here, and what he talked about?"

"Oh, everything, everything! In hearing me talk—after a day or two, when I get rested—you'll hardly regret that Mr. Hawley was not here to receive you, I shall have so many pleasant things to tell you about him."

As he uttered this remark something very like a smile flickered upon the thin features of Bantam. It seemed to him that he was at last receiving the favors of fortune. If he could get off in this clipper, under the pretence of being a shipwrecked sailor, all would yet be well with him. He could elaborate his story before reaching the ship.

"But where *is* Hawley?" he asked himself. "He ought to be on his island. And being there, he ought to have come off to the ship before she anchored. Can he have really gone? Or has something happened to him? Perhaps his boats have drifted away or been dashed in pieces? Yes, yes—that's the very reason he's not visible. Curse him! I shall be even with him yet. I'll— *Ten thousand curses!*"

The last three words were uttered aloud and with such savage violence that Miss Pedder was startled.

She halted abruptly.

"Why, what is the matter?" she asked, turning her eyes upon Bantam.

"Matter!" he growled hoarsely, as he caught her by the arm. "Look here, woman! Do you not see that point yonder, the one at the opposite mouth of the bay? And do you not see a boat rounding that point?—a boat containing three men?"

Miss Pedder looked in the direction indicated.

"Yes, I see the boat and the men," she answered.

"Well, one of those men is Hawley."

"Hawley? What do you mean?"

"I means that he hasn't left the island—that I was mistaken."

"Oh, joy! joy!"

"And I means too, that I'm not so much Hawley's friend as I pretended," added the ruffian, with a despairing curse. "I means that I shall not be able to go on with you to Australia, as I had promised myself the pleasure of doing."

"You—you frighten me!" murmured Miss Pedder. "You hurt my arm, sir. Please let go of me."

"No, I never'll let go of you," said Bantam fiercely, as he tightened his grasp, and a thousand menaces shot from his flaming eyes. "If I cannot be revenged upon Hawley, I can upon *you!*"

"Oh, what do you mean?"

"I means that you are Hawley's wife or sister—I cares not what, so long as you are a very near and dear friend, as you just now asserted. And I means, furthermore, that I'm not a shipwrecked sailor at all, but a runaway convict from Australia—a murderer, an outlaw, upon whose head a price is set—and I'm going to drag you off with me into the interior of this island, where you'll never see Hawley again, nor any other human being!"

And as he uttered this threat, with savage voice and blazing features, he hurled himself furiously upon her, seizing her in his skeleton-like arms, and bounding toward the wild solitudes from which he had made his appearance.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT.

A breathless silence succeeded for some moments the declaration with which we took leave of Hawley, at the close of our thirty-sixth chapter. Neither he nor Mr. Aymar could speak, nor could Jude. They could only stare in silence at the stately ship which had so unexpectedly presented itself to their gaze.

This ship was indeed marvelously like the *Flying Childers*—sharp of bow, high and narrow—a regular clipper, in fact, and carrying a clipper's tapering spars and enormous spread of canvas.

She had already rounded Cape Français from the north and west, and was standing swiftly into Christmas Harbor.

"The glass!" cried Will. excitedly, finding his voice again. "With your glass, Jude, I can see what she is."

The glass was at once handed him. A single look through the instrument was sufficient. His face flushed to a vivid crimson.

"She *is* the *Childers!*" he exclaimed. "I should know her anywhere at this distance! My old ship, Uncle Aymar!"

"But what can she be doing here?" asked Jude. "Can she have come here again for water?"

"That don't look probable," replied Will. "And as I am supposed to be dead, why, it's still more unlikely that the ship has called here on my account."

"I don't know about that," said Mr. Aymar thoughtfully. "Your wife has had time to receive the money I sent to her through Duncan, Sherman & Co., and she may have conceived the idea of making a pilgrimage to the island where you are supposed to have met your death—"

"Oh, uncle," interrupted Will. breathlessly, "you are right! It's possible that Clara is on the clipper. She may have caused it to call here—for the very reason you suppose, or some other. Let's hasten to meet her!"

"Quick, then," returned Mr. Aymar. "Let's bury this money, as you just now suggested, with the treasure you have so miraculously recovered, and push off in the boat to the clipper."

The proposition was instantly acted upon, and in less than ten minutes after sighting the ship, the three men were on their way to the head of Christmas Harbor, where the ship was already coming to anchor.

The four miles of distance between Sentry-box island and Arched Point was made in silence, both Mr. Aymar and Will. being too preoccupied with their thoughts to speak, and Jude respecting their silence.

But as the little boat rounded Arched Point and stood into the bay, in plain sight from the ship, and within two miles of her, a cry of joyous excitement escaped Hawley.

"They see us!" he exclaimed. "All eyes are turning this way. What a stir we are causing!"

The appearance of the boat and its three occupants in the bay had indeed produced an extraordinary excitement aboard of the vessel. Until that moment the crew and passengers had been on the opposite side of the ship, bestowing their attention in the direction taken by Miss Pedder and her attendants, but they now all gathered along the bulwarks on the side nearest to the new-comers, and regarded them with an interest that soon deepened to a buzz of excitement.

"They begin to recognize me," said Will., as the boat drew nearer, and an extraordinary commotion broke out upon the deck of the clipper. "And as they have supposed me to be dead for a year past, it startles them to see that I am living."

A score of men had now mounted upon the bulwarks and shrouds, and were eagerly overhanging the ship's side and staring at the new-comers. And in a few minutes more, when the boat was within a cable's length of the ship, a series of thundering cheers burst upon the air, and scores of hats and handkerchiefs were waved in sign of joyous recognition.

"A good many of my old comrades are here," said Will., flushing with delight, "and they seem glad to see me. But my wife is not here, Uncle Aymar," he added. "That hope was a vain one."

Arising to his feet, he returned the salutations showered upon him, bowing continuously and waving his cap, and it was with this very pleasant recognition on the part of his friends that he came back to them and to the vessel of which he had been the first officer.

A score of well-remembered faces smiled upon him as he came alongside, and brightest among them were those of his successor, Mr. Kingston, and of Captain Hooper, the successor of Pedder.

The reception that awaited Will., as he mounted to the deck of the clipper, was so hearty and general as to bring tears of joy to his eyes. For fully five minutes the air was rent with cries and cheers of rejoicing. Mr. Aymar and Jude Breeling were duly introduced, and at once became objects of general attention.

"It's even so, then? You are really alive, my dear Hawley!" exclaimed Captain Hooper, for the third or fourth time, as he finally extricated Will. from the pressure of his friends, and drew him away toward the cabin, inviting Mr. Aymar and Jude. "How wonderful it is! We all supposed you to be dead. There must have been some mistake about your supposed fall over a cliff three hundred feet high in the vicinity of Table Rock."

"Yes, Captain Hooper, there *was* a mistake. I did not have any such fall. I was knocked in the head by a large, savage looking man, who was evidently insane, and carried off unconscious into a place of difficult access in the interior of the island. Upon recovering my senses, I found myself alone, and from that day to this I have never obtained so much as a glimpse of my assailant."

"Indeed? Who can this man have been? And what was his motive?"

"Impossible to say. The whole matter is an impenetrable mystery. Why the madman should assault me, and thereafter keep himself forever out of my sight, is a secret I have never been able to fathom."

Captain Hooper had now reached the cabin with his guests, and asked them to be seated.

"So much for myself," resumed Will., "for I knew that a word of explanation to you was first in order, but now for a question or two. Is everything right in New York, Captain Hooper? How did my poor wife receive the news of my death? Was she well when you sailed?"

"No, she wasn't," replied Hooper, as a great shadow mantled his face. "The truth is, we all supposed you to be dead, as I've already mentioned, and it was in perfect good faith that Mr. Moody reported your death to Mrs. Hawley, breaking the news as gently as possible—"

"And—and she was terribly shocked, as I feared she would be?" faltered Hawley.

"Yes, she was terribly shocked, and took your loss greatly to heart. In fact— But you will bear like a man, Hawley, the sad news I have for you?"

"Oh, speak! speak!"

"I will say it all in a word, then. Your poor wife never recovered from the shock the report of your death gave her. She faded away like a shadow, and in a few days was dead!"

Without a word or a cry, Will. sank back as if broken-hearted. His stout frame shook convulsively. What anguish and despair raged in his soul at that moment can never be told.

"Dead?" repeated Mr. Aymar, starting to his feet, and fixing his burning eyes imploringly upon Hooper. "Is there no mistake, Captain Hooper? Do you know this of your own knowledge?"

"I do—I'm sorry to say. The poor thing died about a week after the ship's return to New York. I do not remember the exact date, but I have here a copy of the paper containing an announcement of her death, and it will tell you the whole story."

He produced the paper in question, and Mr. Aymar read the false notice Pedder had inserted in its columns.

"Yes, she's dead, William," sighed the old East-Indian, as he finished the reading of those few lines. "Read for yourself."

He passed the journal to Hawley, who hastily scanned the false notice.

"I—I have had my fears of this, Uncle Aymar," faltered Will. despairingly. "I knew well how she loved me."

"My heart bleeds for you, my poor boy, as well as for myself," returned Mr. Aymar. "Our loss is mutual—irreparable. She is indeed lost to us. And this is the end of all those fond dreams we have been cherishing together!"

Covering his face with his hands, Mr. Aymar became oblivious of all around him, while a shower of scalding tears of regret and desolation trickled between his fingers.

"Mr. Aymar is your uncle, then?" asked Hooper of Hawley, after a long silence.

"Yes—that is, my wife's uncle. You may remember that my poor wife was an Aymar. Her father and Uncle Thomas were brothers."

"I see. But how is it that I find Mr. Aymar here with you? Was he wrecked here?"

"No. His presence here is a curious chance, or rather a strange providence. He has passed nearly all his life in Calcutta. About the middle of last February he sailed for New York. His ship being chased and overhauled by the famous Malay Gunner, Uncle Aymar escaped in a boat by himself, after the rest of the passengers had fled, and eventually he drifted to Amsterdam island. Here he wintered, but as no help seemed likely to reach him at that lone rock, he finally set sail in his boat for this island, and it was only this very morning that he arrived here."

"A strange providence indeed!" commented Hooper. "And you had never seen each other until your meeting here? Your surprise must have been as great as pleasant. But how have you lived here during all these long months of your captivity?"

Will. briefly narrated all that had befallen him since he came to Desolation, and then asked Captain Hooper for an explanation of his own presence.

"You certainly didn't come here with any idea of finding me alive?" suggested Will., by way of opening the subject.

"No, I didn't. I came here at Pedder's desire, and in virtue of an arrangement made by Pedder with our owners, merely to gratify the whim of a crazy woman. It seems that Pedder's sister has long been nourishing an all-devouring affection for you—"

"For *me*, Captain? Impossible!"

"I have the fact from Pedder himself. Miss

Pedder has been for years counting upon becoming your wife, and it seems that even your marriage did not destroy her affection. Be that as it may, however, the shock of your reported death was nearly as great to Miss Pedder as to Mrs. Hawley, but with this difference, that while your wife sank into her grave, Miss Pedder became a raving maniac."

"You astonish me! This seems incredible!"

"I merely state the facts as they were stated to me by Pedder. The fixed idea of Miss Pedder was that there was some mistake about your reported death, and that you were alive and well upon this island."

"How strange!"

"And she stuck to this idea with such an insane fury that Pedder at last took advice of several leading physicians, and they all counselled a voyage to Desolation. Their belief was that a cure was out of the question if the patient remained in New York, but they expressed the opinion that a visit to the island and a vain search for you might put the crazy whim of your existence, as they called it, out of her head."

"And so she came here? And this is why the clipper is again here?"

"Yes, and the minute we were anchored, away went Miss Pedder to Table Rock, in charge of her keepers, to look for you, and I am now expecting her back every minute. Her failure to see you may have had a good effect upon her, but I fear she will return from the shore in a state of the wildest frenzy."

At this moment rapid footsteps were heard at the entrance of the cabin, and Cupp Gawler came bounding into the midst of the little party there assembled. His face was beaming, his manner excited, his whole aspect that of a man to whom some great good has unexpectedly fallen.

"Excuse me, Captain Hooper and gentlemen," he cried, "but I bring you surprising news. Miss Pedder has recovered her senses, and is now as sane and sound of mind as any of us."

"The doctors were right, then?" cried Hooper, arising. "But how does it happen—"

"She has had a terrible shock," continued Gawler rapidly. "When near Table Rock, my wife and I allowed her to walk on by herself, as she asked to be alone—"

"You ought not to have done that," commented Hooper. "You should have foreseen that something wrong would happen."

"Excuse me, Captain. As you shall hear, everything has happened for the best. While Miss Pedder was walking along alone, therefore, not far from Table Rock, she was suddenly pounced upon by a ruffian of the most frightful appearance—"

"The very maniac who assaulted me a year ago at the same place, no doubt," interrupted Hawley emphatically.

"He announced himself as an assassin, and as a runaway convict from Australia—"

"Ah! what sort of a man was he? Describe him, if you please."

Gawler hastened to do so, giving a portrait of the assailant that at once suggested Bantam.

"I think I know the man," said Will., recalling his former conclusion that some of the runaways might have been left alive upon the island. "Go on, my friend. Let's hear what happened to Miss Pedder."

"Well, sir, this frightful ruffian, whoever he may be, was about to kill Miss Pedder, when her screams summoned me to the spot, and I was just in time to save her, the assailant taking to his heels as soon as he found that I was too much for him. And to my great joy and surprise, I found that the shock had completely broken the spell under which Miss Pedder has so long been laboring. From that minute to this, she has talked as rational to my wife and to me as I am now talking to you. She seemed to come out of a trance—to be ignorant of her whereabouts, and to remember nothing that has happened since the death of Mr. Hawley was communicated to her. In short, it was like an awakening from a long sleep. But my wife and I soon informed her of all that has happened."

"And where is she now?" asked Hooper.

"Upon the deck with my wife, waiting for me to give you this information before presenting herself. Permit me to introduce her."

And a moment later, escorted by Mrs. Gawler, and followed by a buzz of joyful sympathy from a score of passengers and sailors, who had been discussing her marvelous cure, Miss Pedder quietly entered the cabin.

The change so lately wrought in her aspect and manner was so marked that Capt. Hooper had trouble to recognize her. Her movements were quiet, her air lady-like, her glances indicative of reason and intelligence, and at the same time expressive of timidity and deprecation. The bright flush which had mantled her countenance completely obliterated its late pallor and its late expression.

With a brief, shy nod of recognition to Hooper, whom she had known casually previous to her feigned illness, she sent a swift and searching gaze around in quest of Hawley, and then, her gaze encountering him, she started and took several steps backward, with such well-acted astonishment, with such visible joy, and yet with such modest confusion and restraint, that the whole circle of observers, excluding the Gawlers, broke into a murmur of respect and sympathy.

"I had thought to never see you again, Mr. Hawley," said she, in her smoothest tone and with her gentlest manner, as she advanced toward him, with a graceful inclination of her head. "Your presence here is like a return from the dead. I am as pleased as astonished to see you."

"I reciprocate, Miss Pedder," replied Will., taking the hand proffered him, "and I am especially glad to hear and see that the cloud so long resting upon you has passed away, and that you are yourself again."

"And these are the sentiments of all here present," said Hooper emphatically. "We'll all rejoice together."

Mr. Aymar was introduced to Miss Pedder, a bottle of wine was opened, a collation served, and various explanations exchanged, an hour thus passing as unnoticed as if it were an instant.

"Well, what are your views, gentlemen?" asked Hooper at length of Hawley and Mr. Aymar. "Will you go on with us to Australia?"

"No, thank you," replied Will. promptly. "We wish to go the other way, and have already made arrangements for a ship to call here for us. We are in fact expecting this ship from one day to another."

"Is there nothing I can do for you?"

"Nothing whatever, thank you."

"Shall I not at least give you a suit of clothing? You look odd enough in that suit of sealskin."

"It is very comfortable indeed—just what is needed in this climate. You could not give me anything that would be more satisfactory. This is the answer I made to a similar question from Captain Hedges."

"And so you are going back to New York direct?" said Miss Pedder to Will., in a low voice, a few minutes later, when Mr. Aymar and Hooper had retired to the latter's stateroom to look at a chart of the region where the former had experienced such perilous adventures. "How I wish I could return with you. But that I suppose is out of the question?"

"It is—entirely out of the question. Uncle Aymar and I do not know when we shall leave here. We have sent a friend to Australia, and we expect that friend's return from one day to another, as already mentioned, but there is no absolute certainty of his return for months, if ever. He may have trouble in finding a ship, or his ship may be lost, or fall into the hands of the pirates who have just given Uncle Aymar so much trouble."

"Then why don't you go on to Australia with us?"

"For several reasons. In the first place, we have made an appointment with our friend to be here whenever he does arrive, and that is an appointment not to be broken. In the second place, we have the most weighty of pecuniary reasons for waiting here until our friend's arrival. I will not trouble you with details, of course."

Miss Pedder heaved a deep sigh.

"I comprehend," she said. "I must go my way, and you will go yours. I know not as we shall ever meet again."

She placed her handkerchief to her eyes and began to cry.

"Don't," said Will. gently. "Do you not know what awful news have reached me today? My heart is full already."

"And mine—is broken! All I want in the world is beyond my reach. It is perhaps a misfortune that I have recovered my reason. I wish I were dead!"

"Don't!" repeated Will., with a rising inflection. "You know not what you say. Even supposing you to be miserable, misery is no excuse for desiring death. Your first, last and only duty is to do all the good you can in the world, and to suffer with patience. Pardon me if I add a word about a personal matter. Something has reached my ears as to the cause of your late insanity. That cause is said to have been the report of my death."

"That *was* the cause. I know not how far I may unvail my heart to you without deserving reproaches. But in this solemn hour—the last we shall ever pass together, in all probability—I cannot refrain from a solemn confession. I have loved you for years with all the strength of a first, last and eternal affection. Your marriage was a terrible shock to me, but I withstood it. It was only when I heard of your death that my mind wandered!"

"I thank you for your confidence, and will respond to it in kind. I never sought you in marriage; I never paid you a lover's attentions. My thoughts were elsewhere. The lady I married was my one ideal. I knew nothing of your affection for me, and if I had I could have only given you my pity—and the counsel of bestowing your heart where your hand was wanted!"

Miss Pedder flushed at the severity of these remarks, but came back to the charge resolutely.

"But now that your wife is dead," said she, "is there any reason why you should pass all your life alone? Is it wrong for me to love you now, or to continue to love you? May it not be both wise and kind for you to be indulgent to my affection? Is it not even possible that you will some day learn to love me?"

"No, I do not believe that it is. My heart is entirely with my poor wife—"

"And so you trample upon mine!"

"Excuse me," said Will., arising. "I am incapable of being unkind to a lady, and much less of trampling upon any one's feelings. If I have ever been a source of evil to you, I have been so unwittingly, and can only regret my misfortune. The death of my wife does not change anything, either in your status or in mine. If you are entitled to consideration because you have lost your mind for me, to what respect is not my wife's memory entitled, in view of the fact that my supposed death killed her? The smallest reflection of this kind will tell you that we can never be more than we now are to each other—friends, I trust, and the best of well-wishers. And here let us end the whole matter."

The return of Mr. Aymar and Capt. Hooper at this juncture enforced the proposition with which Will. had concluded.

"Captain Hooper wishes us to go on to Australia with him," said Mr. Aymar; "but I tell him that it is out of the question."

"I have just told Miss Pedder the same thing," replied Will., "and given her an inkling of my reasons."

"Very well. It only remains for us to return to our island, as Captain Hooper is anxious to avail himself of the fine wind and weather."

"All right, uncle. We'll take our leave immediately."

This leave-taking was not without some delay on the part of Mr. Aymar and Capt. Hooper, and a few constraints and reserves on the part of Miss Pedder and Hawley, but it was over at last, and Will. and his uncle returned to their boat, in which Jude was already awaiting them, and set out on their return, while the clipper got under way and stood out of the harbor. Within a quarter of an hour thereafter the boat had rounded Arched Point and was standing along the shore homeward, while the clipper had rounded Cape Français and was taking its course for Australia.

And it was at this juncture that Miss Pedder was aroused from a painful reverie by the announcement of a sail close ahead, and that a large, graceful yacht suddenly loomed up to her gaze in that direction, coming swiftly toward her.

"Good heavens!" was her involuntary cry, after looking at the approaching yacht a few moments. "That man upon the deck of that yacht looks exactly like Luke—like my brother!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

UNMASKED.

BY ALICE STARR.

"Mr. Asher, Mr. Cole—Mr. Cole, my old friend, Ted Asher. And now, gentlemen, that I have broken the ice, you will please excuse me for a few minutes, as I see I am wanted;" and the speaker, Harry Johnson, who was a general favorite, turned smilingly away, and crossed the ball-room to where a group of ladies stood gayly beckoning him with their fans.

"Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Cole," murmured Mr. Asher, in a low, musical voice.

"The pleasure is mutual, I assure you," politely replied the gentleman addressed; "besides, it is an odd conceit of mine, but you seem to me like an old friend; your face is strangely familiar."

"Indeed, no. I think we have never met before. I am a stranger in this part of the country. But come, if you do not intend to join the dancers, let us go to the piazza, where we can watch them, and have a quiet chat."

"Agreed. Dancing is a bore, and a cigar is a much better companion than a lady. Do you smoke?" And as they seated themselves, Mr. Cole produced cigars, and offered one to his companion.

The latter hesitated a moment, as if uncertain whether to accept or decline the invitation, then replied:

"Thank you. I do not smoke at present; my physician forbids it. I am in rather delicate health."

"So I should judge; you look anything but strong, and your complexion is as pale as a girl's."

"Indeed!" and the speaker's voice sounded rather contemptuous. "Do you know that I consider that rather a compliment?"

"Umph! Our opinions differ somewhat on that subject, my friend. Now *I* don't believe that women are so much like angels as some people would make them out to be," replied Mr. Cole.

The handsome, girlish face of the listener flushed, and he exclaimed in astonishment:

"You cannot have a mother and sisters, Mr. Cole, or you would not possess such an opinion."

"Sisters, no—a mother, yes—in heaven. *She* was an angel on earth, Mr. Asher, if ever there was one, but the girls of to-day are not like her. They are but butterflies, and care for nothing but flirtations and fashions."

"I hope and believe that you are mistaken, sir. Perhaps you have not sought for anything deeper than what a flirtation will reveal; and if so, how can you blame the ladies for playing the Roland to your Oliver?"

"Well, every one to their liking, of course; the world is made up of opposites. But I freely confess that I look upon the ladies as merely pleasant amusement for an idle hour—nothing more. Why, man, all they want is flattery. But at present I have no time to waste on *them*, for I have got my hands full in subjugating the proudest beauty of them all—haughty, lovely Nell Atherton. I wish you could see her, really."

His listener smiled oddly, but replied with eagerness:

"I wish I could. Can you not point her out to me?"

"Oh, she's not here to-night; she is off on a week's visit to some relatives. If she were present, I should not be here, you may be sure. No, indeed! Pretty Nell accepts no lukewarm attention, I can tell you; she would chain me to her side the whole evening. But then she's fond of me, there's no mistake about that."

"You think so?" and Ted Asher's lip curled.

"Think so? Why, my dear boy, I'm *sure* of it. I'd like to see the girl who could withstand *me*—ha, ha! Why, she cannot bear to have me out of her sight, I tell you, Asher."

"Well, and that surely must be pleasant. I cannot imagine anything more agreeable than to be with those we love."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Cole, in great amusement; "but I *don't* love her, you see. I have made a wager that I can bring her to my arms, and I will *do* it too. I'm sure of my game; but as for love, pshaw!—I don't believe in it."

"But perhaps *she* does," replied Ted Asher meaningly.

"Well, what of that? Girls have no hearts to break, or if they have, a new silk dress will speedily cure the worst case of heart-ache ever known. But in my case, I don't know but what I shall marry Nell. She loves me, and I should be rather proud of such a handsome wife; besides, I suppose I should be bitterly envied by the village gallants for carrying off the prize. But I should not marry her for *love*, mind you, but out of consideration for her father's *money-bags*—ha, ha!"

"Really your ideas are peculiar, Mr. Cole, and I should like to converse further with you upon the subject, but just at present that is impossible, as Harry and I have an engagement which he seems to have forgotten; so I must remind him, and therefore bid you good-night." And bowing, he entered the parlor; and shortly after, his late companion saw him issue therefrom arm in arm with Harry Johnson, and together they walked quickly out of sight.

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"Oh, Harry, cousin Harry, I shall certainly die—I know I shall. It was too ridiculous!" cried an unmistakably girlish voice; and again a clear, rippling laugh burst from the lips of the one who was so lately introduced as Ted Asher.

"Don't, Nell, for goodness' sake! If you predict such dreadful things, I'll never again consent to aid you in any more of your harum-scarum freaks. But, by all that's laughable, how Ned Cole will be cut up when he discovers the identity of my old friend Ted Asher!" and the young man joined in the girl's infectious mirth.

"And to think," cried Nell, still laughing, "of the miserable creature's boasting to my very face that he would bring Nell Atherton to his arms. Ugh! I could have boxed his ears then and there, and the only thing that restrained me was the knowledge that he would make a fuss, and then every one in the hotel would have recognized me."

"I'm very glad you didn't, Nell; you would quite have spoiled our dramatical *denouement*. And as Cole really needs taking down, I'm not sure but that it may be a very good lesson for him. Oh, by the by, when is the final understanding to take place?"

"Next Tuesday night. And now remember, Harry, you are not to be in the room with the girls; that would make it rather too embarrassing for me; but you can listen in the conservatory, and after the affecting part is over, you can make your appearance as quickly as you choose; the sooner the better."

"All right. Nell, you're a trump. I wish all the girls had your good looks and spirit," said Harry admiringly.

"Thanks, cousin mine; and now—good-night. I'm almost tired to death. I suppose it is from dragging around these heavy clothes all the evening. Ugh! think of having to wear such things every day of one's life!" And with a laugh that had little of weariness in it, she ran gayly up the stairs.

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"You promised me my answer to-night, Nell, darling. What is it? Am I to be the happiest, or the most miserable of men?"

"Well, really, Mr. Cole, you are so impatient, one would almost believe your *heart* was concerned."

"Alas! I have no heart. Your bright eyes charmed it from me weeks ago, fair Nell. Why will you torture me thus?"

"*I* torture you? Positively you amuse me. The idea of a *lady's* having *power* to annoy you. How absurd!" And she laughed gayly, apparently quite at her ease; while her suitor, completely nonplussed at her odd behavior, gazed at her wonderingly, then said affectionately:

"What has come over you, sweet one? You were not wont to be so sarcastic. Do you delight to see the sorrow you inflict on a loving heart?"

"Ha, ha, ha! A *loving heart!* Do you know what that is, Mr. Cole? I thought you did not believe in love."

He started, and gazed at her curiously, then exclaimed reproachfully:

"How *could* I be blind to such charms as *yours*, my peerless Nell? Come, have done with all this irony, and tell me you will be my own sweet bride."

"*Never!*" and her clear voice rang out contemptuously.

"What! you refuse me?" And he sprang angrily to his feet.

"I do, most decidedly; and more than that, I tell you that I *despise* you, Mr. Cole."

"Madam!" cried he, in blank astonishment.

"Yes, sir, I do. I *despise* a braggart and a coward. A coward you are, else you would not talk so lightly of the ladies, and win their hearts but to break them. You are a braggart, because even to a stranger you do not hesitate to boast of your conquests, and even venture so far as to dare to mention the *names* of your lady-loves."

"Who told you all this?" gasped the astonished man.

"*You did*, Mr. Cole. I suspected you, for your flattery was so fulsome. I determined to try your fidelity, and disguising myself in man's attire, I sought the ball-room with my cousin Harry, and was by him introduced to you as Ted Asher. You yourself began conversation on a subject which I had intended to lead you to, and—you know the rest."

"Very well, Madam, since you are so well satisfied with your achievement, which, permit me to say, was at the least unladylike, I will bid you good-evening."

"No, stay a moment," cried Nell, as she threw wide the folding doors, near which, by design on her part, they had stood during the entire conversation, and disclosed to the gaze of her discomfited suitor a smiling circle of the fairest young ladies of the village.

"Ladies," cried Nell, addressing them, "I promised you a novel kind of entertainment, and I think you have had it. Hereafter you will all know how to value the fine speeches of this *gentleman*. Sir," and she turned to Cole, who had all this time stood motionless, as if changed to marble, "you can go; we desire your presence here no longer. Had you been more of a man, I should have called upon those who have a right to protect me from your insults; but as it is, I would not trouble them. I can defend myself. Now go!" and she raised her beautiful arm and pointed toward the door, out of which her abashed suitor was only too glad to escape; but the merry peal of laughter which followed him rang in his ears long after the house had been left behind.

"Well, Nell," laughed Harry, as he joined them, "that unfortunate fellow has had a lesson he'll not soon forget."

"So much the better, Harry," retorted Nell; "I did not mean that he should forget it. I've taught him better than to make game of the ladies, at least for a time. And I'm sure, girls," and she turned appealingly to her friends, "you all join me in rejoicing that a villain has been unmasked."

HOW IT ENDED.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Mother, Mr. Stearns says you can't have anything more, until you've paid what you owe now—four dollars and ninety-four cents. See, he put it down for me to show you," said a bright looking lad of about nine years, as he entered his mother's room; and dropping the empty basket, sank on a stool, looking with a disappointed face up into hers.

"I did not think it was so much. I would not have sent to ask for further credit if I had. I know he never likes the amount to go over five dollars. Saturday night, when I am paid, I always pay Mr. Stearns. I suppose he is worried because I was not up to time. But you know how sick I was," answered the boy's mother, turning to a woman who sat beside her, busily engaged sewing buttons on a shirt.

"Well, I'd just write him a line, and tell how it was, if I was you," said her companion.

"Yes, yes, you are right. I will. But I will not ask him for credit again until I pay him. I'd be sorry to have him think I was not as good as my word. And I'm sorry I can't give you a nice cup of tea and some toast, as I intended to. But—"

She was interrupted by her friend, saying:

"It is all for the best, may be. Oh, of course it is. No doubt about it. 'Everything happens for the best,' was one of the first things my poor mother used to try and impress on her children. Now don't think any more about it on my account. I had a right good breakfast before I left home. Now send Willie off with the line to Mr. Stearns, and then we will finish these shirts in a little time."

Mrs. Grey found it quite difficult to get together the necessary articles for writing the explanatory note. At length, with a sheet cut from Willie's copy-book, and the ink borrowed from her next door neighbor, she pushed off from the table the pile of shirts, and sat down. It took her a long time first to frame in her mind the words she thought the best, and quite as long to write them down. During that time Willie's mind was very much exercised. Too well he knew no one had breakfasted in his home that morning. Not for himself he cared; but for mother and sister Nellie his heart was troubled.

"Oh! why can't I think of some way to make enough money to buy some tea and toast?" he kept saying to himself. And then he went to counting the cost. "Six cents will get a drawing of tea, I know. Then the sugar; four cents for that. Nobody will sell me quarter of a pound for less. Oh, if I only could buy it by the large—a whole pound—I'd get it for thirteen cents. Well, I can't help it; must buy as I can pay. What next? Bread, six cents; and butter, quarter of a pound again. Oh, dear, ten cents more! Oh, when I'm rich I will always buy on the large—a whole pound every time. Now, how much does all come to? Six and four, that's ten; and six, sixteen; and ten again, twenty-six cents. Yes, that's what the tea and toast will cost. But where can I raise so much money? I must; indeed, I must, somehow."

The boy's face told plainly how his young brain was working over the great difficulty, and trying to overcome it. Suddenly his brow cleared, the closed lips parted with a hopeful smile, and he jumped up, exclaiming:

"Hurry, mamma, dear. I have only three quarters of an hour to attend to business before school time."

"Yes, I've finished now. It is so long since I have written a note, it is more difficult than it used to be. But, darling, you can't go without some breakfast," Mary Grey answered, handing the note to her boy.

Willie caught it from her, and sang out, in a cheery voice:

"No matter about breakfast for me. I'm all right. I'll be hungry in time for our dinner. A kiss is enough just now. Good-bye."

He caught his hat, snatched a hasty kiss, and was out of the door a moment after.

"What a blessed boy! Many would have gone off with a different face," said Mrs. Grey's friend.

"He is a great comfort. Oh, I've two cents. I must call him; he will be hungry, I know. I will tell him to buy two rolls as he passes the baker's."

Mrs. Grey, in her haste to call Willie back, swept from the little table the cover and everything on it. She was out on the door-step, and heard not the exclamation of alarm from the little woman, who snatched up the inkstand. When Mrs. Grey came in, a few minutes after, and caught sight of her friend's face, she cried out:

"What has happened? What ails you, Jane?"

Her companion held up two shirts, across the bosoms and sleeves of which most of the ink had fallen.

"Heaven help me!" cried Mary Grey. "Troubles never come singly. What shall I do now?"

Jane Andrews' lips parted. She looked toward her friend, who cried out:

"Don't, for pity's sake. I know what you want to say, Jane—what you always say, no matter what happens."

While the women stood bewailing the dreadful accident, little Nellie had caught the shirts from Mrs. Andrews and plunged them into a pail of water.

"Well, it *is* awful hard to see it sometimes; but still I believe it is all for the best," said Jane, in a determined voice.

One would scarcely believe it possible for the mild, gentle eyes of Mary Grey to flash forth such a look of indignation. After which they filled with tears, as she cried:

"Best!—best that my children should go hungry—best that I shall be deprived of the means to keep them from starving! *You* know Mr. Dyson. Every one knows he is a hard man to work for. I know he will make me pay for those shirts, or discharge me; perhaps both."

Both women rubbed away diligently, and the dreadful spots faded slightly; but it was useless to hope to get them out that day. It would certainly require many hours of hot sun to entirely obliterate them.

"What shall I do? I was to have returned them Saturday. They are to be delivered at noon to-day—a special order," groaned Mary.

"Put your trust in the Lord, and go carry home the four. That's all you can do now," Jane Andrews said, and longed to conclude with her favorite maxim. But remembering Mary's look, she refrained.

Willie, after receiving the two cents, hurried along, neither stopping at the bakery nor Mr. Stearns'. On he went, many streets further, until he came to a pretty, neat looking cottage. Opening the gate, he rang the bell. It was soon answered by a pleasant, motherly looking woman, who asked:

"What is it, my little man?"

"Please, ma'am, I heard you offer Jim Barnes thirty-five cents to clear up your yard Saturday afternoon. I will do it for twenty-six, if—if—"

"Well, if what? Speak out. You are Willie Grey, aren't you?" asked the smiling woman.

"If you pay me now, and let me do it after school, I will be here ten minutes after school closes."

He looked with such an appealing expression up into her eyes, that although she said:

"Why, child, that would be a little risky, wouldn't it?" she looked kindly on him, and Willie felt he had much to hope for.

"No, ma'am. It is a safe bargain. I'll do it, if I live till this afternoon. If you will only give me twenty-six cents, I will be so thankful," he said, the appealing look deepening in his eyes.

"I will do it," the good woman said, and stopped Willie's thanks by asking. "How is it, when Jim wanted fifty cents, you are willing to take about half as much?"

"More than half, a little. Oh, Jim don't know the worth of money. He don't know how much twenty-six cents will buy. He don't know how to spend it right," Willie said, with a manly look. Closing his little hand over his prize, he bowed, smiled, and was about running off, when the little woman called out:

"Willie, I hope you will spend it rightly."

He turned. The eyes that were dancing, the face beaming, grew earnest, and so full of love, as he said softly:

"For mother, ma'am," and hastened away.

"God bless him!" she said, and was still standing on the door-step when a buggy stopped before it, and a gentleman jumped out. Coming up, he said:

"Mrs. Lovering, I feel rather uneasy about the children. The woman I have to take care of them has not much experience. Will you come with me and see what ails them, and if they need a physician?"

"They need a mother's care, poor little dears! Certainly I will go, and be ready in two minutes," answered Mrs. Lovering, hurrying in.

Mr. Dyson waited outside, and pondered on Mrs. Lovering's words. He had been thinking just so himself several times lately, when he could spare the time from business to think of anything else.

True to her word, Mrs. Lovering was ready in the mentioned time.

Willie Grey was just coming out of Mr. Stearns' with his little bundles as they passed. He looked up, smiled and raised his hat.

"That's the best boy I know," Mrs. Lovering said; and when Mr. Dyson asked:

"Who is he?" she answered:

"Why, the widow Grey's son. She works for you."

Strange, yet so it was, that to both Mr. Dyson and Mrs. Lovering came the thought that the widow Grey would be a good mother for the motherless children.

Mrs. Lovering related the incident which occurred just before Mr. Dyson's arrival, and by that time they were before his door.

The little children Mrs. Lovering found really ill. The physician was summoned, and pronounced the malady, what the good woman feared—scarlet-fever.

Ten minutes of nine, Willie stood smiling before his mother. Seeing her troubled face, thrusting his parcels into her hands, he said, in a glad voice:

"It's all right. You will be stronger when you get a good cup of tea. It's my treat. All paid for. I must run, the bell is ringing. I will be late home; got to do some work for Mrs. Lovering. Good-bye."

Again he was off, with blessings following him.

Nellie prepared the tea and toast by the time her mother and Mrs. Andrews had finished the shirts.

Willie would have been sadly disappointed, could he have seen the grave faces that gathered round his treat. However, when she arose from the table, Mrs. Grey said:

"Willie was right, dear boy! I do feel stronger in mind, as well as body. Now I must get ready. Oh, mercy! I would sooner face a cannon's mouth than Mr. Dyson. I know he will be in an ill-humor before I get there; and when I do—"

The pale face grew paler with thoughts of the dreaded interview.

Just then they heard a vehicle of some kind stop in front of the house. Mrs. Grey, looking out of the window, exclaimed:

"Lord help me! It is Mr. Dyson."

An instant after a knock was heard on the door. Mary Grey, pale and trembling, opened it. As she raised her eyes appealingly to his, Mr. Dyson wondered he had never noticed how very pretty the little woman was before. He said:

"Mrs. Grey, I called to see about those shirts. I thought something must have happened to—" He stopped, noticing her agitation, and exclaimed:

"You are ill! Go in, madam. Don't be standing here." And taking her gently by the arm, he led her to the lounge, when she burst into tears, saying:

"Have pity! Oh, Mr. Dyson, I've spoiled two of the shirts!" Not daring to glance at him, she went on: "I know you will discharge me, of course, and make me pay for the shirts too. But, please, don't take it all at once! Pay me some, and let me work just till I pay for the others."

Finding he did not speak some dreadful harsh words, Mary raised her eyes timidly to his.

He was looking at her, not a shade of anger on his brow.

"Am I such a terrible man that I frighten poor women almost out of their senses?" he asked, a really pleasant smile on his face.

"Folks say you are dreadful hard," Mary answered, in a low voice.

"Humph! Well, perhaps I have been; but business is business, and I have little time for anything else. I'm not sorry you spoiled those shirts, for it has shown me what a timid, gentle little woman you are. You would not be unkind or hard on another woman's children. Now I have not the least idea of discharging you. On the contrary, I want to engage you permanently. Will you come and take care of my little children? They are sick, and need a kind, loving hand to tend them."

"Come! Certainly I will. Oh, thank you! How kind you are! I will get ready now," exclaimed Mary, starting up to go into the other room, when Mr. Dyson called:

"Stop a moment. There are some little arrangements to make, I guess. You'll have to close up here, and—and— Well, who do you prefer to do the business?"

Mary Grey turned and looked inquiringly into the smiling face. Mr. Dyson continued:

"What parson, I mean, to marry us?"

"Marry!" exclaimed Mary, sinking again on the lounge, her face crimsoning then.

"Yes, marry. Didn't I tell you a permanent engagement? How else can you be a mother to my little ones? Come, speak out! I'd no idea it would take so long. I don't want the time lost. You have known me six months. Do you like me any better, or not as well, on acquaintance?" asked Mr. Dyson.

"Better. Oh, yes. But—"

Mr. Dyson interrupted her:

"Never mind. Will you have me? We will settle everything as you wish afterward."

"But the children—mine? What about them?"

"I will be a father to yours, when you are mother to mine. And— Well, I will do the courting at odd times, when business is dull, and I have plenty of time. I know women like to be courted; so it well do as well after marriage, won't it? And then I'll not have given you the chance to throw at me, what so many men have to hear: 'All before marriage, and none after.' Now, say quick: Will you have me?"

Mary Grey looked into his eyes earnestly a moment, and then answered:

"Yes."

Mr. Dyson clasped her hand, and with an earnest:

"God bless you! May He deal with me as I do with you and yours. Now about the arrangements?" he asked.

"Suit yourself," Mary answered.

"Thank you. Then I will come to take you to your new home this afternoon, at six o'clock."

Mary opened her lips to utter a cry of remonstrance, but he shook his head and hurried out.

As the door closed after him Mary stepped back into the other room and stood before her friend. Jane had heard most of the conversation, and when Mary asked:

"What *do* you think of me?"

"I think in future you will let me say, 'Everything happens for the best,' because mother always said so; and now I know it for myself."

Willie finished his work for Mrs. Lovering; after which that kind woman went with him to his new home, where his noble qualities were fully appreciated. And he had never reason to doubt the truth of Jane Andrews' favorite maxim. And she, good woman, grew firmer than ever in her faith, when, a year after, she married the foreman of Mr. Dyson's establishment. Grateful for the blessings she enjoys, she is ever trying to instill her faith into all within her reach, by doing, in her humble way, the very best she can for them, both by words of comfort and deeds of kindness.

A MODERN PROTEUS.

BY GRACE H. HORR.

I.
I breakfasted with Mrs. A—
 Andante was her cue;
A slumberous spell was over me—
 I was *andante* too!
I called on beauteous Mrs. B,
 That tender little sprite;
And I was tender, basking in
 Her sympathetic light.

II.
The next I saw was Mrs. C,
 Who carps at all you say;
To me it did not seem quite right
 To let her have her way.
But O, far worse is Mrs. D;
 I don't know what she does—
I only know that when with her
 All goodness from me goes.

III.
I had to call on Mrs. E,
 So empty and so weak;
But when with her I'd naught to say,
 And therefore—could not speak!
There's F, the "fanciographer,"
 Who's posted on the "Nile"—
Or thinks he is—and when he speaks,
 Evokes a bilious smile.

IV.
I dined with dearest Mrs. G,
 So graceful and so good;
She draws out what is best in me—
 By some not understood.
But soon there comes in Mrs. H,
 That high and haughty dame;
And while with her I talk of naught
 But power and pride and fame!

V.
And then there's that impertinent,
 That egotistic I.
'Twere prudent, perhaps, to say no more;
 To home it comes too nigh.
You know old J—that jolly J
 Who's always making jokes,
Of course you cannot talk with him
 As unto other folks!

VI.
I just met K—magnanimous
 As knight of chivalry.
All mean and sordid things I spurn,
 When K I chance to see.
There's little laughing Mrs. L,
 Who laughs all o'er, when met,
An honest laugh; so, when with her,
 How can I sigh or fret?

VII.
O dear! there's M—a magnate too—
 A mandarin in lore;
On books and manuscripts I dote,
 When he displays his store.
Then Mr. N, so kind and wise,
 Comes in to my relief;
He says these studies are all wrong—
 Our life here is too brief.

VIII.
But Mr. O, the orator,
 Whom everybody knows,
When he pours forth his fierce harangues
 He throws me into throes!
I took my tea with pious P;
 She made me feel so sweet,
I do not think I'd know myself,
 If I myself should meet!

IX.
O, bless me! what is this I've done?
 More than I should I've said;
If I keep on at such a speed,
 I soon would reach to Z.
But this I'll say of Mrs. S,
 She stings you till you're blue;
And when with her—I hate to own—
 I feel like stinging too!

X.
And of that umpire U I'd speak,
 And young and yearning Y.
You must not say I've slighted *you!*
 But echo answers, "Why?"*

* * * * *

Am I a modern Proteus,
 To change where'er I go?
I'm sure I'm not a hypocrite:
 My friends all answer, "No!"

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* If the reader will carefully examine this verse, he will find that my echo differs from that celebrated Irish echo which, if one said, "How do you do?" would reply, "Very well, I thank you."

KATE ARLINGTON;

OR,

The Buccaneer's Bridal.

A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER XIII.

PLANS FOR DELIVERANCE.

By the time Dixon had closed the door behind him, and advanced into the room, Kate had so far recovered her self-control that no part of the late struggle was visible upon her face. She had seated herself when the bolt of the door had been shot back, but she arose again as the chieftain came in.

"Kate," he said, in a boisterous manner, "the priest is here, and we will be married at once."

"At once?"

"Yes. Why should we wait?"

The captive took a step backward, but not shrinkingly, nor did she betray the least sign of repulsion. Her eyes were clear and steady, and her lips were firm.

"When you say at once, do you mean to-night?"

"Yes, Kate,—to-night."

"The week is not yet up from the day of the departure of the pinnace."

"No. She had a fair wind, and Father Riego was at hand. What care we for the week?"

"I care for the week, because I had so fixed it in my mind. Let me be by myself for to-night."

"Bah! What good can that do? The fate is fixed, and what can you gain by delay?"

"It is my fancy."

"And women's fancies are light things."

"You will find it for your good, nevertheless, to humor this one."

"Eh? What d'you mean by that? What'll you do if I bring the priest in to-night?"

"If you bring the priest in to-night," was the slow and deliberate response, "I will refuse to submit."

"You will refuse?"

"I will!"

"And what good will that do you, pray?"

"You forget, Barker Dixon, that your success in this scheme depends upon making me your legal wife. Remember—a wife cannot be legally made without her consent. You may, in your power, triumph over me, but you cannot gain my property."

The pirate stamped, and swore, and once, when he made as though he would advance, Kate carried her hand to her bosom as if to grasp something there.

"Do not waste your strength in this impotent rage," she said, with calm assurance. She was as one who had counted the cost, and would abide the issue. "You know your own power, and you know mine. I have spoken as I mean."

The bad, reckless man gazed with astonishment upon the bold and fearless girl before him. He eyed her sharply, and could detect not a trace of fear in her look or bearing. Her eye burned steadily and unflinchingly; her lips gave not a token of quiver; and her frame showed no sign of quaking. Evidently she was not to be driven. He might reduce her body to subjection, but he could not bend her spirit. She had told him truly. To accomplish his darling project—to gain that for which he had labored so hard, and risked so much, and sacrificed so much—the girl's fortune—he must make her his wife; and she must be legally his wife—she must speak the vow in the priestly ear. On a mere flimsy pretext he might claim a husband's control over the person, but not over the property. He saw it all, and gradually his brow relaxed, and he nodded graciously.

"My dear girl," he said, seating himself as he spoke, "I have made my proposition, and you have rejected it. Will you now make yours?"

"I have none to make that would please you," replied Kate, promptly. "I can only listen."

"You mentioned the week. The week will be up to-morrow."

"On the day after to-morrow, sir."

"Well, so be it. If I will leave you to yourself until that time, will you then become my wife?"

"How, Barker Dixon? Do you ask that question of me, expecting me to give it serious answer? Do you think that I can here promise you a thing which, from the very bottom of my heart, I pray God may never come to pass?"

The buccaneer arose, and stamped his foot furiously upon the floor, and with a fierce, fearful oath, he swore,—

"You are mine beyond the power of earth to interfere or prevent! I have not come thus far to be turned back by a woman's mad freak of will. I have hoped to gain your fortune—I am free to confess it—partly in the love for gold, and partly in love of revenge upon your father,—but I will have you, at all events! And if you wilt not be my wife by your own consent, I will take you as I can, and no word shall ever go to your father of your fate. Until now I had planned to set Dr. Gaston soon at liberty; but if this is to be your freak, the first effect thereof shall fall upon him. Do you hear me?"

Kate trembled now in earnest.

"I understand you not," she whispered.

"Within an hour," pursued Dixon, with another terrible oath, "Thomas Gaston shall be thrust into a deep, strong dungeon beneath this building, and there he shall await the issue of this business!—Would you like to see the strong places we have walled up in the bowels of the island for the safe keeping of those we would not lose? If you would, I will show them to you. And be sure old Moses can be a faithful jailer!"

With the swiftness of light it flashed upon Kate what use the pirate had meant from the first to make of Tom Gaston toward her subjection! The thought was horrible, as the plot of the murderous freebooter was horrible; but he was equal to it. Blood would add no new stain to his hands, and the blood of Gaston would rest no more heavily upon his soul than rivers of other blood had rested.

What should she do? She looked into the bad man's face, and she knew that he had not spoken idly. He had only opened to her the plan which he had entertained from the moment that both she and Tom had been in his power.

What should she do? The time of the pirate's patience was brief. If Tom were to be deprived of his liberty at this time, all hope of escape was gone. This was a dilemma she had not anticipated. She looked once more into the chieftain's face, and when she had read the stern resolve which possessed every feature, she bowed her head upon her hand.

What should she do? Tom must not be cast into the dungeon. He must not suffer; and he must not be thus snatched from the work of redemption already conceived, and, perhaps, already planned.

"What is your answer?" demanded Dixon, breaking a long silence.

Kate looked up, a shade paler than before, and with marks of internal conflict upon her fair face.

"Barker Dixon," she said, slowly and solemnly, "you know that I love Thomas Gaston, and through him you hold the key to my will. Let all be well with him—let him be left free and unharmed—and the rest shall be as you say."

"And you will be my willing wife?" demanded the pirate, eagerly.

"If," returned the captive, with calm and truthful solemnity, "on the day after to-morrow you persist in your claim, and demand, in spite of all my remonstrance, that I shall be your wife, I will not resist."

"But will you speak the word of assent in response to the priestly summons?"

"If at that time you hold me to my promise—YES!"

"Enough!" cried the chieftain, with a triumphant glow upon his face. "Until the hour of the morning of the day named you shall be at rest, and Gaston shall be safe and well. Good-night! and may your dreams be pleasant."

And with this the pirate chieftain turned and left the apartment.

At a later hour Kate knew, from the boisterous sounds that broke upon the air of night, that high carnival was being held by the buccaneers, and she had no doubt that the chieftain was engaged in the debauch.

* * * * *

The shock which fell upon Tom Gaston when he saw the pinnace enter the coral-ribbed bay there is no need to describe. The first emotion was one of despair and bitterness—bitterness against the fate which had allowed this thing to happen. But Luke Gunbar, having not so much at stake, was more cool and thoughtful.

"Don't give up yet," he said to the doctor, as they stood alone upon the forecastle.

"It is hard, Luke,—my soul! it is hard. You know Barker Dixon's plan, and you know his character. What grounds have we for hope?"

"I can see three things that p'int out hope," replied the gunner, coolly and moderately. "In the first place, Miss Arlington has got your note. She made a signal plain enough, as I told you, of its reception. So she knows that she has friends at work for her, and of course she will be ready. In the second place, the lady has got the most courage of any woman I ever saw. We've got men aboard this brig—men that we call brave—that an't so cool in danger as she is. Be sure she won't surrender easily. She'll gain time if the thing is possible; and I think the thing is possible, because Barker Dixon has set his heart upon her money, and he may have to humor her to make sure of that. In the third place, the capt'n may be inclined to make a night of it. He and Jack Thorp have already been at the punch-bowl. If Miss Arlington is shrewd, as I think she is, she will escape the toils for to-night."

"And to-night we may get her off," cried Tom, with a gleam of hope.

"We can try."

"Have you made any arrangements?"

"Yes, such as I could; but arrangements for our start are few. We want a boat in readiness, and a little provision. Our hope is to meet a vessel outside without much sailing. As for the boat, I can get that without much difficulty when the time comes."

"And the time?"

"Don't be so excited, Doctor. You'll waste the strength that is to serve you by and by."

"No, no, Luke. When the need comes you shall find me equal to any emergency. I am anxious, as you would be if your heart were torn as mine is. We must move to-night."

"Yes,—as soon after midnight as may be. Friday is on shore, and will keep watch of the capt'n's movements."

"And will Friday go with us?"

"No. I should not dare to trust him so far. He knows nothing of our plans. He only knows that we seek knowledge of the present situation of the lady. And now, Doctor, do you keep quiet, and I will make my way on shore. I will do what can be done of observation and preparation. You see that point of rock just above the palms,—or, you know where it is?"

"Yes," replied Gaston; "and I can see it. I can see where the waves break against it in the starlight."

"At midnight," pursued Luke, "if I meet with success, I will come down to that rock with a dark lantern; and I will open the slide, and expose the light of the bull's-eye. If you see it, you will be ready to start. Gather your traps, and stand by for the chance. As soon as I have given the signal I shall put off and come along side. I shall do it boldly, giving the look-out good excuse; but we must get you into the boat unobserved. When I get aboard I will draw the watch away, and you can seize the opportunity. All this is supposin' that we find things favorable ashore. Do you understand?"

After a little more conference Tom understood, and ere long after that Luke Gunbar went aft. He had not been gone long when a boat came off from the shore, and one of the negroes from the stone house came over the side. Tom was moving from his position by the night-head to discover, if possible, what word the sable messenger had brought, when Luke hurriedly came forward again.

"Hist!" the gunner whispered, grasping Tom by the arm. "Things are workin' gloriously. The capt'n has sent off for Roger Wade and me to come ashore and make a night of it. They are havin' a regular blow-out at the castle. The priest is singing, and the capt'n and both mates join in the chorus. I'm off, so keep watch, as I told you. I have my lantern in my pocket."

There was no time for further conference, and the two friends separated again, Luke to go in the boat with Wade, while the doctor remained upon the forecastle until the boat had been pulled away.

There was carousal on board the brig as well as on shore. Some fifty men had been left in the vessel, and most of them were inclined to drink. The officer left in charge was a man named Markham, who rated as third mate, and did the duties of sailing-master. He was a sober man—never known to drink to intoxication,—and for this reason Dixon had left him to keep an eye upon the *Adder*, and especially an eye upon the doctor. The other men, however—those not sick—drank and rollicked to their hearts' content until near midnight; and they might have drank longer had not the leaders of the debauch, ere that hour, drank themselves stupid and supine.

During the first watch of the night Tom Gaston was attentive to his patients, and to the preliminaries of the coming struggle. As he had opportunity he secured a pair of trusty pistols, with accompanying ammunition, and also made up a package of a pair of blankets and an extra peacoat. Half an hour before midnight the riotous ones of the crew had mostly tumbled off into a state of unconsciousness, and having seen the occupants of the sick-bay as comfortable as he could make them, and leaving his assistant in charge, he crept up to the forecastle, and took position where he could watch the point of rock on shore.

The minutes dragged slowly away, and at length the last refrain of the ribald song below was hushed. With eager gaze the watcher peered through the gloom, the intense effort of the eyes to pierce the dark curtain often causing luminous points and circles to dance in the line of vision; and more than once Tom was momentarily deceived thereby. But finally the light came in earnest. There could be no mistake this time. Away in the direction agreed upon appeared the bright glare of the bull's-eye—a fiery ball, swaying to and fro for a few seconds, and then disappearing. Then it appeared again, and having been swayed with a circular motion, it disappeared for good.

Tom slipped below and secured his bundle, and then hid himself where he could watch further movements without being observed. Ere many minutes after he had thus bent his ear he heard the plash of oars along side—he heard the hail of Markham,—and he heard the grating of a boat's rail under the gangway,—and then he heard a man come over the side, and Markham asked,—

"Is that you, Luke?"

"Aye, Markham."

"You didn't row off alone?"

"I had to. I was the only one sober enough of the officers to send. But I have the light dug-out, and she pulls easy. I'm after the Spanish signal-book."

"What's wanted of that at this time o' night?"

"The capt'n and Jack Thorp have had a high dispute about the admiral's signals, and they will settle it by the book. Won't you take the deck lantern, Ed., and come down into the cabin with me?"

As soon as Tom heard the two men descending the cabin ladder, he secured his bundle, and glided on deck. All was silent, and only the stars of heaven gave light to the scene. Having assured himself that no look-out had been left behind, he crept to the side, and climbed over the gangway, and descended to the boat. He found a tarpaulin in the after part, and believing that it had been left there for the purpose, he hid himself beneath it. He had not long to wait in this position before he heard voices at the gangway above him; and he knew that Gunbar was coming over; and he heard Markham say, half jestingly,—

"If you are the only one sober, Luke, you must look to the others. Thorp has bad blood in him when he's drunk. Don't let him and the capt'n get into a quarrel."

"I'll be careful," answered Luke. "But you needn't fear for the capt'n. He's holdin' himself quite steady."

In a moment more the gunner was in the boat, and the painter was cast off.

"Are you here, Doctor?" Luke asked, in a whisper.

"All right!" answered Tom, from his hiding-place.

And then Luke took his seat, and plied his oars with a will.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FINALE OF THE DEBAUCH.

The night was calm and clear. There was no moon, but the stars were out in brilliant array, and in that warm southern atmosphere there was a phosphorescent glow upon the sea and upon the coral reef that rendered the way easy to our adventurers. And yet objects could not be distinguished at a great distance upon the water. There was haze enough lying low upon the surface to shroud the boat from far-off watchers.

In pulling to the shore Luke made a detour to the northward, and landed in a sheltered cove above the point where he had made his signal.

"Of course I needn't tell you to be careful," he said, as the doctor followed him upon the little crescent beach. "We've got a ticklish job before us, and will need all the caution we can muster."

"I have been in tight places before this," replied Tom, in a whisper. "Lead the way, and give me the cue, and I'll do my part."

"All right," said Luke. "Hold easy a moment. Help me with the boat. We mustn't let her bottom scrape an alarm, for we don't know who may be cruisin' around among the rocks."

The boat was lifted noiselessly away from danger of floating off, and then Luke took from her bows two pieces of rope, together with a rope-ladder to the end of which strong grappling-hooks were attached. The loose ropes he gave to his companion, and the ladder and a boat-hook he took himself.

"Now," he said, "we will set forward. Look out for rocks in the path."

"Does Miss Arlington expect us?" asked the doctor, with an eagerness which showed that the query had been long in his thoughts. "Have you given her any signal?"

"Yes," replied the gunner. "I looked out for that. I was at the garden wall an hour ago, and saw her on the watch as she had been directed, and I sent her another order on an arrow. She got it, sir. It wasn't writ as you wrote, but I'll venture to say that she didn't take long to make it out. At all events, it wasn't but a precious few moments before she waved her handkerchief back to me."

Thus assured, Tom Gaston followed hopefully on, careful when he spoke not to speak above his breath, and careful of the loose stones in his path. It was a roundabout way which Luke took, leading up over the summit of the island, and approaching the objective point from the westward. But the wall of the garden was reached at length, and no note of alarm had been given. As they rested beneath the shelter of a clump of lime-trees they plainly heard the sound of revelry from within the stone house.

"They hold out better here than do their mates on board the brig," said Tom, as the sound of song and chorus broke the air,—"better, or worse, as you please to call it."

"Aye," responded Luke. "They've got tough heads—this crew. We'd better make a cover of their noise, and hurry up."

"You can't hurry too much to suit me," said Tom.

"Then stand by. I'll go up first, and take an observation, and you can watch for the signal. You've got your slung-shot and dagger?"

"Yes."

"Then hold 'em sharp. Don't touch a pistol under any circumstances.—Stand by!—Look out!—You'll pass me up the ladder when I want it."

The wall was of solid masonry, with no projections or indentures upon its face offering a hold for climbing, and was full ten feet high. Near to the spot where our adventurers had stopped, however, grew a cypress tree, the branches of which reached to the coping, and by the help of this Luke gained the ascent in the present instance, as he had done before. From the top of the wall he looked across to the window of the house, and saw that the lamp was still burning. Taking a blade of grass from a tuft in his belt which he had plucked at the foot of the cypress, he fixed it between his thumbs, and placing it to his lips, he produced a sound like the chirp of a locust. And this he repeated twice. At the first chirp he saw a shadow flit across the light at the window; and immediately upon the third call the light was extinguished.

"All right!" he whispered, turning, and bending toward his companion. "She's on the look-out, and understands our signal. You can come up by the tree?"

"Yes."

"Then pass up the ladder and the ropes.—Easy!"

Fixing an end of the ladder to the boat-hook, Tom easily raised it to Luke's grasp, who drew it carefully to the top of the wall; and afterward the ropes were lifted in like manner; and then, while Tom was climbing up by the tree, Luke fixed the hooks of the ladder securely upon the edge of the coping, and lowered the other end into the garden.

"There is no light!" whispered Tom, as he reached the cap-stone.

"No," said the gunner. "She's just put it out. We don't want it glarin' upon us in the garden."

The twain listened a few moments, and then, with the utmost caution, descended into the inclosure.

Within the house the captive was on the watch, as she had been continually since the reception of the first note of preparation. On the present occasion she had listened for every sound; and every swaying vine, as it had grated upon the casement, had caused her to start and bend her ear attentively. At an early hour her lamp had been placed in position, and after long and anxious waiting she had been startled by the advent of a second arrow. It fell as the first had fallen, and, like its predecessor, it bore a paper upon its shaft. The writing upon this paper was not in Tom's hand, but it was friendly. It warned her that help might be looked for near the hour of midnight; and its closing admonition was this:—

"When you hear the shrill chirp of a locust sound three times, put out your light, and be ready."

She had heard the chirping signal, and she had extinguished the light; and now, with such articles as she wished to take with her, she stood by the open casement and watched.

Once after this she went to the door communicating with the hall and listened. She could hear the voice of the chieftain in ribald jest, and she could distinguish the response of his fellows. She looked to see that the fastenings which she had improvised upon the inside of the door were intact, and then she returned to the window, and throwing open the casement she stepped out upon the narrow balcony beyond, and very shortly thereafter she saw a dark form emerge from the orange trees and approach the open space below her, and directly a second form followed in the steps of the first. She bent her ear, and caught the well-known accents of Tom Gaston's voice:

"Kate! Are you there?"

"Yes, Tom."

"Thank God!"

Then another voice sounded—coarser than Tom's, but kindly:—

"Hist! Can ye catch a rope if I throw it up?"

"Yes."

"Then look sharp.—Now!"

The end of a rope, in a small coil, came directly into Kate's hands, and she signified that she had got it.

"Don't make it fast," came from below. "Just pass the end around the rail, and send it down to me. We want to take the line after us."

Kate understood, and acted accordingly. Passing the end of the rope over and under the iron rail of the balustrade, she overhauled it and sent it back, and as soon as her friends below had thus secured both ends, she caught the double line and descended—descended to find herself in the arms of Tom Gaston, who had pushed Luke aside, and stood ready to receive her. But he did not suffer his ardor of emotion to betray him into any injudicious act.

"Thank God for this!" he uttered, as he caught her to his bosom; "and may He help us to the end!"

There could be no more words spoken there. Luke drew the rope down from the rail of the balcony, coiling it as he did so, and then he led the way to the wall where the ladder had been fixed. Tom was the first to ascend, and Kate followed him without faltering. Then Luke came up, and quickly threw the ladder over upon the outside, and secured the hooks anew; and in a brief space the trio were safely landed upon the sward beneath the cypress tree. Luke gathered up the ropes, and had turned to speak with Tom, when a whisper from Kate quickly arrested his attention.

"We are discovered!" she said, pointing with her finger toward the western angle of the wall.

Luke looked, and he saw a dark form advancing from the lime trees.

"Lay low!" he whispered; "and, lady, don't you scream."

There was no need of this caution to Kate. Tom was more frightened than was she, and while the gunner stood on the look-out she actually pulled him back behind the cypress, and placed her hand over his mouth.

"Who's here?" demanded a voice which was recognized as belonging to one of the negroes of the place.

"I want to see the capt'n," answered Luke, who had fixed the loop of his slung-shot upon his wrist, and was prepared for emergency.

"Who is it?" asked the guard.

Luke made sure that the fellow was alone, and then approached him more boldly.

"I'm glad, Pomp, to find you so watchful. The capt'n stationed you here, didn't he?"

"Ayah!—dat's you, Mas'r Gunbar. Yaas,—de cap'n hab a watch kept. Ole Moses put me here."

"And where is Moses?"

"In de house."

"And where are the others of the watch?"

"Dar an't none only me round here."

"Well, Pomp, you are guard enough.—Who's that?"

The negro turned his head in search of an imaginary intruder, and on the next instant the slung-shot descended upon his skull with a force that sent him to earth like a log. Luke did not care to kill the man—he had not the heart,—but, calling Tom to his assistance, they dragged the senseless form away among the limes, and there bound it hand and foot, and lashed an effectual gag upon the mouth.

"There is no need of shedding his blood," said the gunner, as he took the last turn with the lashing of the gag. "If the blow of the slung-shot hasn't killed him, let him live."

"Let him live," responded Tom. "We won't meaningly take life save in absolute self-defence. But, Luke, if that should come—"

"I understand, Doctor.—If that comes, there can't be any question;—but I hope it won't."

"God grant it!"

"And now let us hurry. Follow me, and step carefully."

They gained the boat without further interruption, and were soon upon the water, and when Tom and Luke had seated themselves at the oars Kate asked what plan they had in prospect.

"Our plan is this," replied Tom, who sat nearest to her: "we will make our way out through the coral pass, with the mysteries of which Luke is thoroughly acquainted, and once outside we will strike to the northward, hoping either to make one of the Caicos, or to fall in with a friendly sail. Who knows what may be in wait for us? Your father cannot have been idle all this time; and we know that the Government will render him all possible aid. Let us hope for the best."

"Easy with that oar!" admonished Luke. "We mustn't wake up the *Adder*."

Tom took the hint, and feathered his oar more carefully. Slowly the boat crept around the edge of the bay, and at length struck into the labyrinthine pass. Here Luke opened the slide of his dark lantern, and set the light upon the bows, and then took position for guiding the way through the tortuous course they were to follow. It was not danger of running upon the rocks or coral reefs that was to be feared, for the channel was broad enough,—but it was the greater danger of missing the only open course to the sea, and becoming lost in a maze of winding passes which could only lead them back into the bay, or hold them locked within adamantine walls. But Luke had no fears on this score. He knew the way, and was prepared to follow it. If he had fears, they lay in another direction.

* * * * *

At the stone house the pirate crew drank and caroused. Of the drinking throng the chief maintained the least unruly knees. He did not seem to deprive himself of drink,—his glass was at his lips in response to every jest and every unseemly toast,—but it may be that his glass held less spirit than did the others, or it may have been that the presence of another absorbing consideration held his faculties above oblivion. The old Spanish clock that stood in the corner of the banqueting hall had struck the hour of one when Jack Thorp rolled away under the table, making the eighth which had gone under since midnight.

Father Riego was swaying to and fro, as though a few more glasses would send him to keep company with the defunct, when Dixon bethought him that the matter had better hold up for the present. He must preserve his own head respectably clear, and he must keep the priest upon his pins, for the morrow; so, with the assistance of Moses, he brought the drinking to an end, and left the drunken ones to sleep off their stupor.

Having seen Riego laid safely away, Dixon concluded that he would look in upon his fair captive before retiring. He did not mean to disturb her, but he would see that she was safe and well. With a lamp in his hand he went to the door of her sitting-room, and carefully withdrew the bolts, but when he attempted to open it he found resistance from within. He pushed with all his strength, but the door would not yield. He kicked, and called loudly; but there came back no answer. In a fever of excitement he hastened out and called for Moses to come and force the door. The giant came, and an effort of his Herculean shoulders burst the fastenings, and opened the way.

Dixon hurried in, and found the bed-chamber empty, and the bed unpressed. The open casement revealed to him the rest. If he had been partially drunk when he sought the chamber, he was thoroughly sobered now.

"Moses," he said to his major-domo, "you have had sentinels posted without?"

"Yes, master."

"Then let us go out and look."

In the banqueting hall they obtained a lantern, and then went out to the rear of the garden wall, where Moses called his sentinel by name.

"Pomp was on here," he said.

"Was he sober?"

"He never gets drunk."

With an oath the chief swore that mischief was in the wind.

They found traces of feet under the cypress tree, and the Ashantee followed them to the lime grove, where their sentinel was found bound and gagged. With his knife Moses quickly cut the cords, and cast off the gag, and Pomp was alive, though stupid. Dixon questioned him, but he could give no clear answer. His brain seemed to be in a muddle. Moses suggested that a glass of rum might help him, and he was dispatched to obtain it.

The Cyclop was not gone long, and when he came back he brought both rum and water, and he applied it both outside and in. The result was as had been anticipated. Under the influence of the stimulant the man so far recovered his consciousness as to be able to remember and to speak, and ere long he had told all that he had to tell, which was, that Luke Gunbar had waylaid him and knocked him down, and that there had been another man with him whom he had not known.

"And the woman?—Was there a woman with them?"

Pomp thought there was.

The chieftain needed to hear no more. It flashed upon him with blinding intensity that Gunbar had been playing him false from the moment of his acquaintance with, and dependence upon the young surgeon. With rapid strides he returned to the house, and called up the only two men who were fit, at that hour, to assist him. Then, with other lanterns, he went down to the landing, and found the skiff gone. He needed not to waste time in searching upon the island. If the fugitives were on shore, they could be found at any time. Only one avenue of escape was open to them, and as Gunbar knew the secret of that way, they had probably taken it.

A heavier boat was quickly put off, and, with Moses and the other two men in company, Dixon pulled out to the brig, where he found Markham on the look-out. A comparison of notes with the third mate afforded further solution; and when, upon search, it was found that Dr. Tom Gaston had gone, the clue was complete.

The irate chieftain cursed and swore at the general stupidity of all concerned, condemning himself as much as he condemned others, and when he had thus ventilated a portion of his wrath, he set about preparation for repairing the mischief.

On board the brig a dozen men were found fit for duty, and of these Dixon selected eight of the most reliable, and having armed them, he called away the fleet cutter, and sent them into it, himself and Markham and Moses following.

"Will we want a light?" asked the mate.

"No," answered the chief, peremptorily. "I know the passage too well. A light upon our bows would only afford quick alarm to the fugitives. Push off, and pull for your lives!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A BURGLAR'S PHILOSOPHY.

We were lately reminded in a most striking manner of the philosophical fee which a burglar once paid to Sir Walter Scott in lieu of lucre. Our friend Richerton, who lives on the Snow Hill Pike, hearing that burglars were about, purchased a big bull-dog, and put a new lock of approved and patented construction upon his stable door. Within a week from that time his dog had been poisoned, the patent lock picked, and his stable robbed.

Sir Walter, in his days of law practice, was once called upon to defend a house-breaker at Jedburgh. The fellow had no money, but his friends had been friends of Sir Walter, and the kind-hearted lawyer not only pleaded his cause, but gained his acquittal. After the trial the prisoner approached Sir Walter, and having thanked him for the service rendered, said,—

"I am sorry that I cannot give you a fee of money such as you deserve; but I will give you two items of information which may be of value to you in the time to come, especially if you are to live apart from thick settlements. First,—a yelping terrier or poodle inside a house is a better protection than a big dog outside. Second,—there's no lock that gives a burglar so much trouble as an old rusty one."

C.

WILD ASTREAS.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

In flaming purple, with golden
Hearts that are honey sweet,
The myriad-clustered astrea trails
Her splendors at my feet;
Over the fading uplands,
And down in the valleys low,
Brimming with balmy spices,
Her delicate flagons glow—

Cups of the fairy feasters
That revel by vague moonlight,
Pledging their Queen in nectar
Distilled from the dews of night;
'For I've found, at the flush of dawning,
Wherever the astreas meet,'
The wind-worn films of gossamer robes,
And the prints of invisible feet!

Queen bride of the swart October,
She wields with a graceful pride
Her many blossomed sceptre
O'er fields and forests wide;
For the russet gold of his tawny locks
She braideth a crown of flame,
That paleth the blush of summer,
And putteth the rose to shame.

She spreads for his royal footsteps
Her mantle of purple and gold;
With the tender grace of her virginal face
She kindles his twilights cold;
In the cool gray gloom of the woodlands
Her starry clusters shine—
She flushes the sterile hill-side
With the glorious hues of wine!

I've a vague and foolish fancy—
That yet hath a touch of truth—
That she blooms in the breast of Autumn,
The flower of Immortal Youth;
For hints of an unknown fragrance,
And tints that have no name,
Breathe in her subtle perfume,
And burn in her cups of flame.

And wherever the piteous hillocks
Of lonesome church-yards rise,
She broiders the green neglected graves
With the purples of paradise;
And over the meanest pauper
That sleeps by the ruined wall,
Her golden blazon glitters,
Her gorgeous hatchments fall!

She keepeth her lonely vigil
Mid the wrecks of summer lost,
When the smouldering torch of the golden-rod
Is blackened by rain and frost;
And I've gathered her shining blossoms,
When the hills and the moorlands low
Were scourged by the vengeful North winds,
And gray with the spectral snow.

MISS FOXWOOD.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Miss Foxwood was good looking. There is no doubt whatever about that. But uglier women had married, and she had been bride's-maid to them too, and still she was Miss Foxwood.

Whether the gentlemen who figured in her letters to her friends as having proposed to her, and having been rejected, were myths; whether they occupied the position in her life that Mrs. Harris occupied in that of Sairey Gamp; or whether she actually *had* tortured so many estimable gentlemen with the stings of unrequited passion, her most intimate acquaintances could not be sure. But, as they said, why Sally Ann Foxwood should reject such good offers passed their comprehension; for Sally Ann never pretended to be sentimental, and owned to being at her wit's ends for money; and Sally Ann had glided from the twenties to the thirties, and would be over the forties, as one dear friend remarked, very soon indeed, "if she did not take care."

Meanwhile Sally Ann took all the care she could. She sang sentimental songs, and made big eyes at every man she met. She neglected nothing unmarried that wore hat and boots, from boys in jackets to old men in wigs. "Her eyes looked love to eyes that" did not "look love again." But all did not go merry as a marriage bell.

At first Miss Foxwood had been particular about looks, position and money. Then she would have had any manner of man, as far as outward form went, if he possessed position and money. Now she had given up position. It was anybody with money—anybody, no matter who. She still sang her favorite song:

"I cannot give my hand
Where my heart can never go,"

with *empressment*, and with a roll of the eye toward the masculine who turned the music. But when she first sung it, she had had an idea that her heart might be the victim of a pair of fine whiskers some day, and now she knew that she had no heart to give any one. She had flirted it away in little bits, until it was all gone.

So was the little money that her mother had left her. Miss Foxwood had actually made up her mind to advertise for a husband, and take anything that offered, when there came into the boarding-house in which she was located an old gentleman, stout, red-faced, gouty, hot-tempered, and rolling in gold. That is, the landlady said he was rolling in gold—a figurative expression that suggests an unlimited supply of cash, and a sort of Fortunatus purse always in the waistcoat pocket. Miss Foxwood "went for him." Who can keep out of slang in these degenerate days? Miss Foxwood "went for him" at once.

She sang the divine songs; she rolled the divine eyes; she smiled; she fanned herself; she expressed fine sentiments. She professed to scorn beardless youth, and to admire men in their prime—*about seventy*. And Mr. Gaspard, who had a young heart in his old bosom—who had always liked fine women, and who had been kept a bachelor by cruel fortune, who had only dispensed her blessings after he was in what Miss Foxwood called his prime—saw a fine woman evidently smitten with him, possessed himself of the idea that she was an angel, "courted her with brooch and ring," and finally popped the question in Mrs. Timpkins' back parlor, with Mrs. Timpkins' house-maid listening at the key-hole—a fact of which, of course, neither Miss Foxwood nor Mr. Gaspard were aware.

"And says she," said Maggie, rehearsing the scene to Mrs. Timpkins, "'Lor! Mr. Gaspard,' says she, 'this *is* so *on*expected,' says she. 'Not *on*welcome, I hope,' says he. Says she, 'How kin it be,' says she, 'when it comes from one like you?' Then I dropped the broom, and had to run away."

And curious Mrs. Timpkins, espying a diamond ring on Miss Foxwood's taper finger, after a few days made up her mind that her maid-servant had not spoken falsely.

Miss Foxwood *was* engaged to Mr. Gaspard. She had promised to marry him in three weeks.

He, for his part, was delighted with his promised bride, and wore his hat very much on one side, and assumed a youthful and jaunty gait, in the delight he felt at his own success. He believed that all the men at the table—little Simpkins the dry-goods clerk, Tappen the law student, the Rev. Mr. Holdfast, and Charles, Mrs. Timpkins' sixteen-year-old nephew—envied him from their souls.

Could he have known how Miss Foxwood had sang, "Oh, believe me, if all those endearing young charms," to Simpkins, so evidently meaning his, Simpkins', charms; had he known how Tappen had had need of his legal knowledge to evade a case of breach of promise; and how the Rev. Robin Holdfast, a meek young clergyman, dreadfully afraid of women, had been almost proposed to out and out by the despairing Sally Ann; had he seen the lock of hair culled from his tresses by Charley Timpkins, for the same lady's wearing in a locket, he would have been a sadder but a wiser man. And oh, had he read the letter, the dreadful letter written by Sally Ann to her Aunt Maria, on the night of her engagement! But you, dear reader, shall see it:

"DEAR AUNT: You told me, when we last met, that it was high time I made my market. I acknowledged the truth of your suggestion. I've done it. I'm engaged!

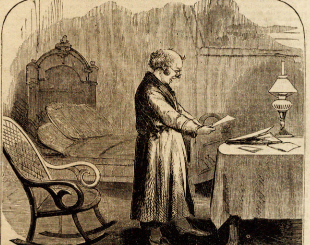
"Dear me, when I look back and think how very much I did fancy myself smitten by young Holbrook, a big blonde fellow with English whiskers; and then there was Captain Craik, with his black eyes and dashing way. I used to say I'd only marry a handsome man, and now— Well, if you could only see him. He is fat enough to roll. You can just see his eyes. He is all muffler and umbrella and overshoes. He has the gout now and then. He has never been good looking; and now he's seventy. No matter; he is very rich, and dreadfully spoony about me. He shall take me to Europe, and hang diamonds all over me. And he sha'n't make his will so that I can never marry again, if I know it. I shall live like a queen. *Do* send me either my wedding-dress, or money to get one with. Daddy Gaspard shall pay it back some day. If you don't or can't, I'm sure I don't know what I shall do. And you ought to be glad enough to do it, instead of having me quartered on you for life."

When Miss Foxwood had written thus far, she made a great blot, which forced her to copy the letter before she could dispatch it to her aunt. But all that followed were the usual affectionate niece and the signature.

Sometimes Satan deserts his friends in their greatest need. I am sorry to say his majesty must have behaved thus to poor Sally Ann at this moment, else what could have impelled her to thrust the blotted letter into her portfolio instead of tearing it up?

She did it, however, and the copy was sent, and by return mail came a reply.

Aunt Maria summoned her niece to her presence, and promised an outfit. And in great glee, Miss Foxwood bade a temporary adieu to her betrothed lover, and went off to her aunt's, promising to return in a week at farthest.



It was midnight. The house of Timpkins slept. Suddenly there came a sound to break the silence. What was it? What could it be? Cannon? An earthquake? A comet's tail? The English bombarding the city? Mrs. Timpkins and boarders appeared in shawls, dressing-gowns, water-proof cloaks, and even blankets. All were there but Mr. Gaspard, and howls came from that gentleman's room. Mrs. Timpkins produced her keys. None fitted the door. Charley Timpkins suggested breaking it down, but at this a faint voice proceeded from within the room.

"He's alive," said Mrs. Timpkins.

"Poor dear!" cried the ladies.

"Anything the matter?" cried the gentlemen.

At this moment the door opened. A ghost in a counterpane hobbled out. A cloud of white dust came with him. The ceiling of Mr. Gaspard's room had fallen, and a piece had hit his gouty toe.

"It's a massy it warn't his neck or his back, and him to be married so soon," said the house-maid.

Mr. Gaspard heard the words; they comforted him. After all, what was one's toe, when one's heart was light with love?

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Timpkins. "I'm very sorry indeed, Mr. Gaspard. It's that nasty landlord. I've showed him that crack fifty times. Where shall I put you? Oh, it's just a lucky chance. Here is Miss Foxwood gone to her aunt's, and her room empty. You can take that for to-night, and to-morrow I'll fix the back parlor, if I can't do better."

And the door of the vacant room was unlocked, and Mr. Gaspard in his counterpane toga entered, and was seen no more, except when his head emerged from the aperture of the nearly closed door and he asked for a match.

Shut in, locked in, he sat down in a chair. His toe hurt him very much, but he forgot it. This then was her room. Here she sat and dreampt of him. Here she slept and dreampt of him still. She had told him so.

"Ah, my dear girl," said Mr. Gaspard, who was genuinely in love in an honest way that did him credit, "how I will pet her; how I will try to make her happy when she's mine. They'll talk about May and January, I know; but, bless my soul, it isn't May and January. It's full bloom beautiful August and ripe October. She says I'm a very handsome man still. I hope I'm not vain, but it's very pleasant that she should think so."

There was such a beautiful fascination in the room that he could not think of sleep. He walked about, touching the little things that belonged to the absent Miss Foxwood—her work-basket, her books, her knitting-needles, her inkstand. He found a mysterious white garment on a chair—a garment with ruffles on the wrists and at the throat—and wondered, in masculine ignorance, whether that might not be her wedding dress. And then he sat down at her desk and opened her portfolio.

"Dear little soul!" said he, "I wonder whether she ever writes poetry? I mean to see."

And then it came into his mind that if he found verses addressed to himself, and written before she knew he loved her, that he should be a very happy man. Don't laugh at him. This sort of thing comes to every one some time. He had never been in love before.

My friend, I am going to take you out of the room now. You may see Mr. Gaspard open the portfolio. You may see him find that unlucky blotted letter which lies within—the letter Miss Foxwood wrote to her Aunt Maria—but you sha'n't see my poor old Gaspard read it. He may be past youth, he may have had a little vanity in his honest heart, but he was a true man and a true lover for all that. Come away.

You remember the case of Foxwood versus Gaspard, don't you? And how the beautiful plaintiff shed tears in court, and how her lawyer called the defendant, "a monster unworthy of the human form," and how his love-letters were read aloud, and how the fact that he called her "his angel," "his pearl," "his nightingale," and his "own one," were brought up against him; and how the feelings of the injured angel were valued at ten thousand dollars and costs, by an admiring judge and jury. Very well. Then you know the end of my story.

—It is far easier to detect error than to discover truth: the one lies on the surface, and can easily be discerned; the other lies deeply hidden, and few are able to find it.

BEAUTY AND WISDOM.

The following, from my Scrap-book, has point and pith, though of course, in reproducing it, we expect to except from the force of its application such present company of readers as have a right of appeal from the judgment:

A sage of the court of the Emperor Altoun Khan was exceedingly plain looking, and on a certain occasion a daughter of the Emperor said to him,—

"What great abilities are possessed by thee, and yet how ugly thou art. I am surprised that wisdom so rare should be found in so mean a vessel."

"Tell me," answered the sage, "in what vessels do you preserve your wine?"

"In earthen," said the Princess.

"And thou so rich! Beg of thy father that he put his wine in silver vessels."

She did so, and in vessels of silver the wine soon changed to vinegar.

"Wherefore hast thou persuaded my daughter to such folly?" demanded the Emperor.

The sage explained the occasion of the advice. He had wished simply to impress a great truth upon the mind of the Princess—that Beauty and Wisdom—beauty so commonly denominated—seldom dwell together.

"Still," said the Emperor, "there are beautiful men who are at the same time learned and wise."

"And yet," returned the sage, "if they were less beautiful they would probably be more learned and more wise. A handsome man is seldom humble,—he thinks of himself, and hence forgets to learn." S. C., JR.

SCIENCE.

The shooting stars which fell on the nights of the 9th, 10th, and 11th of August last, were counted by skilled observers at Alexandria in Egypt, Barcelona in Spain, Marseilles in France, and Turin in Italy. The largest numbers were seen at each city on the second night, 1,167 being observed at Alexandria: 4,854, in all, were counted, exclusive of those seen at Marseilles on the third night, and concerning which no return was made. In a discussion upon these facts, at a recent sitting of the Paris Academy of Sciences, it was stated that the number of meteors in these annual showers has constantly decreased since the year 1848.

The victualling department of the French navy has been experimenting on what it calls "artificially made butter," by which is meant a preparation extracted from meat, and intended as a substitute for ordinary butter. Sliced beef suet, fresh sheeps' stomachs, shredded, and carbonate of potash, are placed in water at a temperature of 113 degrees Fah. A quantity of fatty matter separates and floats on the surface. This is first subjected to hydraulic pressure, and then mixed with a little milk and water and churned. The new butter is the result. It is pronounced excellent.

In modern maritime warfare it is frequently very desirable to conceal from the enemy an approaching steam-vessel, the difficulty of doing which is often enhanced by the smoke from the funnel, which generally can be seen over a great distance. A device for discharging the smoke under water, by means of a blowing machine, has been tried in the Austrian navy with most satisfactory results. Of course this dispenses with the smoke-stack entirely. It is said also to secure a more uniform consumption of fuel, and greatly to lessen the liability to fire.

Mr. Pogson, the official astronomer at Madras, has been severely censured by the local government for his failure to give timely warning to the proper marine authorities of the approach of the destructive cyclone which visited the harbor and city on the 1st of May last. One of his prescribed duties is to furnish notices of approaching stormy weather, but he neglected it on this important occasion, by reason of some disagreement with the officers of the Marine Department, to whom the notice should have been sent.

The effect of violet light on vegetation has been widely discussed within the past few years, and the most diverse opinions are expressed in regard to it. M. Boudrimont, in *Les Mondes*, gives an account of his experiments, the result of which was to demonstrate that all colors are unfavorable to vegetation, and none more so than violet. M. Poey's previous conclusions as to the latter color were directly the reverse of this.

Most interesting discoveries concerning the parasites which infest the false hair worn by ladies, continue to be made by M. Lindeman, as we learn from the *British Medical Journal*. He terms these organisms navicellæ, and calculates that forty-five millions of them are set free in a ball-room containing fifty ladies. They produce Bright's disease, he tells us, as well as affections of the heart and lungs.

Cupreous pyrites is the name of a crystalline mineral composed of sulphur in combination with copper. Specimens of this substance found in Spain and Portugal contain a certain proportion of gold and silver, which until quite recently was wasted. We learn from the *Athenæum*, however, that these precious metals are now profitably extracted from the pyrites, at works in the vicinity of Liverpool.

Nature recently described an earthquake as having occurred on July 12 at "Chopea, in Khandeish," the shock extending to "Amalner, Dhurrangaon, Dhulia, and Julgaon." As we do not think that this can have been intelligible to many readers without a reference to the atlas, we will state that the locality referred to is in the northern part of the province of Bombay, in British India.

At the Melbourne observatory attempts have lately been made to photograph the planets and some of the brighter nebulæ or starry-cloudlets, as Mr. Proctor calls them. Pictures of the planets were taken, but no impression of even the brightest nebulæ could be obtained.

Parties at work on the western portion of the Northern Pacific Railroad report the discovery of ancient mounds in Oregon, containing pottery and other curious relics, the origin of which is attributed to some race which occupied the country prior to the Indians.

A scheme for the further exploration of the South Pole was laid before the Geographical Congress at Antwerp by Dr. Neumayer of Berlin. He thinks it should be combined with one of the expeditions to observe the transit of the planet Venus in 1874.

Mr. Hyde Clark, in a paper read before the British Association, maintains that the ancient nations of Europe possessed a knowledge of America, dimly preserved among them, but not understood by the Greek and Roman geographers.

In France it has been ascertained that when illuminating gas finds its way into tree-covered ground, the rootlets are destroyed and the growth of the timber is seriously interfered with.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A SLAVE writes: "I have read the *Ledger* now steadily for over ten years, and find everything in it so good and satisfactory, especially your answers to correspondents, that I have ventured to come for a little advice also. I have been married twelve years. When first married, we were not worth anything; now we have about ten thousand dollars. We both work at different departments in the same business, and have earned the money together. Eleven years ago my husband bought a building spot, with an old unplastered tumble-down shoemaker's shop on it, it being near our place of business. He told me if I would go there the next year, he would build a house, as we were in a way to pay for it; but I soon found he did not mean to build, by its making him so angry for me to mention it. He hoards all my earnings with his, getting them under one promise and another, which he never fulfills, and leaving me to nearly suffer to death for lack of suitable clothing. He owns his course is a wrong one, but that his growing love of hoarding money is so strong, it is impossible to conquer it. My life is so utterly slavish that my health has completely failed, and without some sort of change I do not think I will live a year longer. I have friends living in your State who would gladly receive me, and I wish to go to them for a while, to try if by staying away I cannot open his eyes to the wrong he is doing me, before it is too late. Now what I wish to know is this: is there any law by which, if I should do this, he could compel me to live with him? He is so terribly self-willed, I am sure he would attempt it, let me go where I would. Now please do not cast this aside, but give me an answer when you have opportunity." Your case is one of great hardship, and if "the worst comes to the worst," you can go to your friends, and on his attempting to force your return, set up your case. He must be lost indeed if he will have such mean wickedness exposed. But you had better try all other means, and consult your friends before taking this step.

ALEXANDER (Dayton, Nevada) says: "Having been a constant reader of your *Ledger*, I shall be pleased to have the following answered: I am twenty-seven years of age, have some means, and shall start into stock-raising and farming generally at some place in Washington Territory by next spring. It is my intention to get married, if possible, before I leave here; but as I have no chance to make the acquaintance of some suitable lady hereabouts, I wish to be informed whether an advertisement to that effect you deem advisable, or what other way you would suggest." We do not recommend advertising for a wife as a general thing. We think it better to look around, and to tell one's confidential friends, and count upon something turning up. You see, to make the advertisement of any use, you must go into particulars, as to means, age, habits, appearance, temper, and other matters, on both sides. You must, besides, advertise in your own neighborhood, in order to give you a chance to see the applicants; and this is sometimes awkward. Persons have been known to reply to such appeals who were not eligible at all, by reason of sex—so heartless is a large portion of mankind.

CHARLIE (Selma, Ala.) says: "I have a friend who is to be married the last of this month to a young lady in a neighboring town, and he is undecided as to part of his dress. At his earnest solicitation, I appeal to you for advice in regard to the matter. He intends to leave for his home—which is a day's travel by rail—immediately after the marriage takes place. Such being the case, and at this season of the year, would a white satin or Marseilles vest and white gloves be suitable for the occasion? Or would not a black silk or velvet vest, colored gloves and black neck-tie be more appropriate under the circumstances? Please do not throw this in your waste basket, but give me—or him—your opinion about it, as it is a matter of great importance to him. By doing so you will confer a favor on one of the *Ledger's* most constant readers." It is quite common for parties to be married in travelling dress, with which, however, the white vest, etc., will not be found incompatible. Many persons travel at this season of the year with light vest; and he may indulge on his wedding-day in a second pair of gloves for travelling, darker in color than those in which he is married.

IGNORANCE (Hapden Cor., Me.) says: "I wish to ask your opinion on the following sentence through the *Ledger*: 'They will find it to be sorrow, not joy; Dead Sea apples, not celestial fruits, etc.' Now, are the words 'sorrow,' 'joy,' 'apples' and 'fruits' the objects of the infinitive 'to be,' or are they in apposition with 'it,' and objects of 'will find?' It seems to me that they are the objects of 'to be,' but some say 'to be' is not a transitive verb, therefore can have no object; but the grammar says an intransitive verb can be transitive in some cases, and I think this is one. However, we have concluded to refer it to you." The language and technical phraseology of grammarians vary, but we should not consider this a case of apposition at all. The apposition is in "sorrow," "Dead Sea apples," which mean the same thing, and are explanatory of one another. As to the other, the full form is, "they will find it to be sorrow and not to be joy," and instead of entangling one's self in distinctions between transitive and intransitive, it would probably be better to say that the verb "to be" has the same case after it as that which precedes it.

A MAN WITHOUT A NAME says: "When I was quite young I was adopted by a gentleman by the name of ——, who has brought me up, and who gave me a name. I do not know who my own father is, and cannot find out. I am now of age, and wish to have a name of my own. Will you be so kind as to answer the following questions in your Notices to Correspondents in the next number of the *Ledger*, and confer a favor? Could I assume a name of my own choice, and go by that name, or will I have to go to law in order to get a name?" There being no "Doctors' Commons" or Herald's office in this country, there is much latitude in the matter of names. You appear to be free to please yourself; you had better inquire of a lawyer who knows all the circumstances, and you should probably consult the gentleman who brought you up. It would be awkward to take another name, and find that you were abandoned in his will.

WILLIAM D. (Arupsior) says: "I noticed in your *Ledger*, a short time ago, a piece headed, 'Winter nights and winter mornings the time for study,' in which it states that two hours, morning and evening, should be devoted to reading, and as I intend to do so this winter, I wish you would kindly inform me, through the medium of the correspondents' column, what would be best for me to read, or what books I had best study—that is, that would be useful to any young man anxious to get a general knowledge of things." Books of travels, good biography, and reliable history, constitute good reading for a young man. Have, besides, a good religious book that you can read even a little in daily. Young men need education of conscience, no less than of memory and judgment.

EXCELSIOR (New York) says: "As a subscriber and reader, permit me to ask you if you will answer through your correspondents' column of the *Ledger*, the following: Do Territories send a Representative to the United States Congress, elected by the people, and are they there represented the same as any of the States? If you will answer this in your next issue, you will decide an argument that has been had on that subject." A territory, by its very nature, has not yet been admitted into the United States, but is organized with a separate Legislature, and a Governor and territorial officers appointed by the President and Senate.

ADOLPH O. S. (Natchez, Miss.) says: "I am a boy between sixteen and seventeen years of age. I am undetermined which profession to seek—whether that of a lawyer, engineer, or to engage in business pursuits. I have a decided preference for engineering. My funds for an education are very limited, and therefore I come to you for advice. Which would you advise me to study for? Is the business of an engineer profitable?" The advantage of pursuing that for which you have a decided preference is so great as to outweigh, as a general rule, considerations of expense. Engineering is very well remunerated.

BELLE AND ROSA (Iowa) write: "Which is the best piano there is? Do you think two girls aged sixteen and eighteen ought to have a piano, when they want one very badly, and are fond of music, and their father is able to get one?" There are many good manufacturers of pianos. Some prefer those of one make, and some those of another. We think that you ought to have one, provided your father, in addition to being able, is also willing to buy one. If he is not, perhaps your husbands, when you get them, will be.

DISTRESSED ANNIE (North Carolina) writes: "I am a young lady seventeen years old, and have a sister. We are both in love with the same gentleman. When we are both together, he acts as if he liked us both the same, but when he is with me he tells me he loves me, and when I am not about, he tells my sister the same. Will you please tell us what to do?" If you are both in love with the same man, we think that one of you had better get out of love with him as soon as possible.

A CONSTANT READER (Albany) says: "By stating in your next issue where Horace Greeley's father was born, you will greatly oblige." According to Mr. Greeley's "Recollections of a Busy Life," published in the *Ledger*, and now in a goodly volume, Mr. Greeley's grandfather "lived in or on the verge of Londonderry," in what was, in his—Mr. Greeley's—youth, Nottingham-West, and is now Hudson, across the Merrimac from Nashua. There, we presume, Mr. Greeley's father was born.

LILLIAN (New York) says: "Do you think that it is right for married ladies, whose husbands are engaged in business, to hold positions as teachers in our public schools, while there are a great many unmarried ladies in our schools who are without situations?" Certainly, assuming their competency, if their husbands approve, and they are equal to the work. The principle to which regard is had in these cases is not how many require a place, but who can best fill it.

STELLA says: "Would you oblige by answering through your correspondence which of the two sentences are correct: namely, 'Salesmen are not allowed to look on the sales sheet;' or is it, 'Salesmen are not allowed to look on the sale sheet?'" We prefer the latter—sales sheet being the ordinary and proper description, as it appears to us.

ADA says: "Please answer a constant reader of your most valuable paper one small question: What will cure a young lady of bashfulness?" Education and intercourse with sensible persons. The disease is rare, seldom chronic, not serious, and it may be usually predicted, "She will grow out of it."

ROSE AND ESTELLA (Quincy, Ill.) ask: "How should a young lady receive a serenade? How should she acknowledge her thanks?" If it is early in the evening, and she knows the serenaders, she may invite them in. If it is late, she should go immediately to sleep, and dream sweet dreams.

R. D. S., who says that she is a British subject, wishes to know how she can recover for forty-three bales of cotton belonging to her husband, which were seized by our troops during the war. She had better consult the nearest British consul.

M. K. (Mississippi) wishes to know a remedy for stuttering. The habit may be in part overcome by practicing talking very slowly, and always persevering until you say what you undertake to.

COUNTRY DOCTOR says: "Often, while reading answers to correspondents in the good old *Ledger*, have I been surprised how largely the questions refer to love, courtship and marriage. Whether your wise counsels be always followed or not, many parents certainly feel highly indebted to you. Some trifling words apparently often turn the 'matrimonial mania' in young heads, in quite a sober direction. Quite a number of years ago, the only daughter of a physician 'fell in love' with a charming young man. Her parents opposed the matter, first, on account of her youth and inexperience; secondly, because they had no faith in the young man. The young school-girl wrote her grief to the *Ledger*. The answer, as near as I can remember, was to this effect: 'Tell your mother all about it; she, of all others, is best able to guide you aright. Clandestine marriages never bring happiness.' Sobered by this answer, the young girl refused to elope with her 'first lover' just then. This delay brought to light a plot which was no more nor less than the ruin of the estimable young girl, who now lives the wife of one of our ablest physicians, while the would-be lover has long since paid the penalty of his vicious career. He was a married man at the time he proposed to the young girl. There is so much *concordias discors* in the married state because young people do not calmly consider how they are suited to one another. Some outward charm captivates, enchains and blinds their judgment. Many such cases loom up in my experience, and doubtless in the experience of every retired physician. Some pleasant and some tragic family histories will, at times, crowd the mind. But I have written almost too long a letter, and you will doubtless put me down as having *cacoethes scribendi*. *Dominus Vobiscum!*" As a rule, we do not make any public use of communications in the strain of the foregoing—though they are not unwelcome to honest toilers; but the nature of the letter appears to justify exceptional treatment in this case.

ALICE (Red Wing, Minn.) says: "Having been a reader of your paper for fifteen years, and seeing your readiness to oblige your friends, of whom I am proud to feel myself one, though I am known to you only through the subscription list, I take the liberty of troubling you with a few questions which it is very important to me should be answered immediately. What kind of paper is considered the best for author's manuscript? Is it best to write directly across the whole side of a sheet, or upon alternate pages? What is the best way to send MSS. by mail? in a sealed envelope, or in an open package—that is, in a roll left open at the ends? Would an article, really good, and well written in other respects, be rejected on account of faults in punctuation? Please answer these questions, and oblige a widow with three little ones dependent upon her." The paper known as post, or foolscap, is usually thought most convenient for authors, and the plainer the writing the better chance the MS. of a new author has. Write on alternate pages, that is, on one side of the paper. Author's MS. *for books*, securely fastened and open at the ends, so described, goes at special small rates. But a valuable MS. had better be sealed and registered. Faults in punctuation have often to be corrected; for intelligent printers are better judges of punctuation than many authors. Printers will never get all the credit they deserve *in this world*. Forgive us for adding, finally, that if you write, you must not count upon Editors taking anything into account but the merit of your piece, unless you have otherwise made a name; and any defects, of spelling for example, would raise some presumption against the character of a writer as being educated. See the notice of Fanny Fern in our last number, and be of good cheer.

CLARA F. asks: "Will you do me the favor, in the next number of your valuable weekly, to say something about the Feejee Islands, in the Pacific? I understand that there are quite a number of whites living there. I should like to know something about the climate, population, etc. Please state the best way of getting there, whether by way of San Francisco, or by the way of London, and what would be the expense by either way, and the time it would take." The Feejee or Viti Islands lie in the South Pacific Ocean, in lat. 15 deg. 30 min. to 20 deg. 30 min. S., and long. 177 deg. to 178 deg. W. They were discovered in 1643 by Tasman, the Dutch navigator. The principal island of the two hundred and twenty-five which make up the group is Great Feejee Island, which has a population of fifty thousand. Most of the whites reside on another important island, Ovolan. Hurricanes occur at several seasons of the year, and earthquakes are common; but, on the other hand, the soil is fertile and well irrigated. The mean temperature is about 80 deg. There are no domestic animals except hogs and a few fowls. Bread-fruit, plantain, the banana, cocoa-nut, sugar, arrow-root and nutmeg grow in abundance. Great Fejee was ceded to the British government in 1861, and since then English capitalists have established plantations of coffee, sugar and cotton, and bought large tracts for raising sheep. The best way to get there is by San Francisco; but the expense is a very uncertain quantity, dependent very much on the mode of travel. Most of the people who go there out of curiosity make the trip in their own yachts.

F. E. E. S. writes: "Some seven months ago, I fell in love with a young girl—a beautiful girl too. She loved me very much, and I did the same—I loved her very much, and love her still. I can't love any other one but her. One day, in a discussion, I used some language which she did not like, and she did not speak with me for about a week, when I explained myself to her. Well, we got all right again. Now, last month there was a festival, and I should have gone along with her. It was two nights. The first night I could not go on account of business, which I could not leave by any means. I told her so. Well, she said she would go with some of her lady friends. I said, all right, and enjoy yourself well. That night she went home with some other young man, and went there too with him. The next day I did not see her at all until in the evening. When I went to her house to go to the festival with her, she treated me very coldly. She answered my questions very briefly, and hardly spoke at the festival with me. I thought it best not to say anything then. We went home, and when we were about a square from her house, she told me very coolly that she could go home herself now. She bade me good-night, and went home. I did not see her for the next four days, and when she sees me, she turns right around and goes away. She let me know that she has another young man to go to a ball which comes off this week. I cannot and will not love any other young girl, and must have her back. I think the best way would be to go to her, and ask for an explanation." We think so too.

VETERAN (Michigan) says: "Having been a subscriber to the *Ledger* for several years, and seeing so many good, kind answers in your correspondents' column, I thought I would ask a question. Having been a soldier in the late war, I am entitled by act of Congress to one hundred and sixty acres of land. I have a small farm of forty acres, nearly all wild, on which I owe a small sum. It would probably sell for one thousand dollars. My family consists of myself, wife and one child—a boy nearly six years of age. Lately I have thought I would sell out, take my means and go west to take up land there. To this my wife strongly objects, she having, from hearsay, taken a serious dislike to any and all the western States, saying she would not like it out there, etc. I do not wish to do contrary to her wishes in this respect, as one little unpleasantness might lead to another; but to procure a fitting home for our child, I am willing to endure much more than the loss of home associations. Please give me your advice, at your earliest convenience." The chances are that you would do better where you are, than you would do by selling out, and going off into a strange locality, where you would have to begin life anew, even to the building of a cabin. Forty acres is probably as much land as you can till to advantage.

FANNY writes: "About three years ago I made the acquaintance of a young man of good standing, and was believed by all who knew him to be a perfect gentleman. After the acquaintance of about a year he asked me to marry him, and I promised him I would. He left a short time after our engagement. We kept up a regular correspondence for a year, after which time the correspondence ceased, and I am perfectly ignorant of the cause. I never hear from him only through friends. The engagement has never been formally broken, as I have the ring yet; or do you consider it broken by his conduct? Don't you think I have the privilege of keeping company with other young gentlemen?" His conduct has absolved you from the engagement, and set you as much at liberty as you were before you knew him.

J. C. (Carson City) writes: "My husband forbids me to have cucumbers on the table, as he thinks they are very unhealthy, and he even went so far as to say that if cucumbers came on the table, he would not stay at the meal. Do you think, if several persons were at the table who liked them, I ought to have them, or not?" The only question is, whether you prefer the cucumbers to your husband, or your husband to the cucumbers. His objection does not seem entirely reasonable, for fresh cucumbers are very wholesome for many people; but then, reasonable or not, he *is* your husband.

I. F. W. H. (New York) puts the following questions: "Will you inform me what will remove a dark blue circle under the eye? And if a lady gets angry at a gentleman, and assigns no reason, should the gentleman notice her afterward?" To the first we reply, usually good hours, food, temper, and other means of good health. Some cover it up under paint or enamel, and pay the penalty afterward. You omit to state the relations of the lady and gentleman, and much turns on that. A man's laundress, for example, or chambermaid, ought to make overtures toward reconciliation; but with his wife, or the lady he desperately loves, it would be quite another affair.

GEORGE W. REED (Chicago) writes: "In your Notices to Correspondents, please answer the following questions: What salary does Speaker Blaine receive as Speaker of the House of Representatives? What salary does each of the other members get?" The pay of the Speaker of the House of Representatives is eight thousand dollars a year, and mileage. A Member of Congress gets five thousand dollars a year and mileage. The mileage is ten cents a mile, reckoned from the member's home to Washington and back again, over the shortest travelled route.

A. G. T. writes: "I am engaged to a young man whom I love devotedly, and thought he loved me until now. He has quit coming to see me, and goes with another lady. I want to know whether I ought to send his ring back, and release him from his engagement, or ought I to ask him for an explanation?" Have an explanation. If you are going to differ and separate permanently, do it understandingly, and you will both be better satisfied than you will to leave the matter in a state of uncertainty.

C. B. asks: "What do you think of a young man of twenty learning the painter's trade? Is it a good one?" The principal objection to the painter's trade is that lead is used principally in paints, and it is a very poisonous metal. Those who work in it are subject to what is called "painter's colic," which is often fatal, and to other forms of lead disease. Some other trade is preferable for this reason.

B. asks: "Can a President of the United States be elected more than twice?" He can be if the people will vote for him. There is nothing in the way of it in the Constitution.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*